

Spring 2007

Depression
Expressions
You can't snap
out of it
Grace Under
Pressure
Speech and
Self Esteem

How to win
an argument,
get your
driver's licence
and make
yourself
heard

Crystal clear: Life and meth on the street

This man is going to tell you how to deal with your life

OK,

the only people who may know

SOMETHING

about what's going

ON in your **LIFE**

would be other

TEENS and then,

ONLY if they hang

out with you and

SOMETIMES that's

not even the case,

especially when your

FRIENDS are completely

OUT TO LUNCH

and some of your **PROBLEMS** are very **SERIOUS**.

So why don't

you get **OFF**

your **BUTT** and

WRITE some-

thing yourself?

You could get

PUBLISHED, it

may make you

FAMOUS and then

you can have your

own **PERFUME** or some-

thing just as **LAME**, but

it will make you **MILLIONS**.

Grip. It's your life. Grab it.

This magazine is currently seeking writers, illustrators, animators, poets - creative types of all kinds - between the ages of 13 and 18. Articles, poetry, short stories, illustrations, comic strips and photography will be considered. Send questions and samples to creative@griponlife.ca. You will be paid. Really. Not a lot, but it's still money.

griponlife.ca

what's inside FEATURES

The Great Debate

How to Win Any Argument; Top 10 Ways to be Heard;
On Feeling Misunderstood; **PLUS: What kind of
fighter are you?**

BY SCAACHI KOUL, CURTIS WENDLANDT,
LACEY MORRIS AND LEVI MICHAUD

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Grace Under Pressure

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stuttering BY JARROD ROBERT WEISNER

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It's his room but it's her house – who's
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BY LANA HALL

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BY KENDRA DOETZEL

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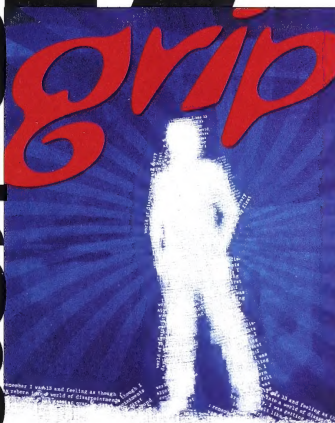
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The Last Word Walk a mile with this
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a girl's best friend again. BY SHELLEY ASTILL



A Message From the Youth Advisory Council

From cell phones to the Internet, from whispers to shouts across the hall, every day a teenager's life is virtually abuzz with communication in various forms. This issue of *Grip* is centred on just that: Communication and how we interact with the world.

Grip's contributors tapped into this beehive of information to bring you a first-hand look at how teenagers react and respond to the social networks that fire like neurons every millisecond. Some articles are a stage for heated debate, such as a he said/she said feature by a mother and son over room-cleaning duties. Others focus on speech itself, such as an article written by a writer living with a stutter. Another facet is the unique bond of communication between twins.

Every living thing relies on being understood to survive. Body movement, sound and even physical appearance sends a message. The way you send and receive ideas is as individual as you are. How do you communicate with the people you encounter each day? Is it different with friends than with strangers? Your relationships can change the way you communicate; the way you communicate can change your relationships.

Many teenagers feel misunderstood by today's society and don't want to reach out. Countless songs have been written expressing this theme: You just don't understand. We decided to find out what makes teenagers feel so disconnected and help them identify their challenges.

The Youth Advisory Council would like to take a moment to thank you for opting to read the third installment of *Grip*. We would also like to thank everyone who made this issue of *Grip* possible. If you would like to contribute next time, please visit our website and drop off a submission, idea, question, poem, story, or whatever else comes to your mind. We want you to communicate with us so that we can bring you a magazine that you are proud to read.

Stephanie Jones and Kyle Laforce
Grip Youth Advisory Council

A Message from the Alberta Mental Health Board

I'm proud to welcome you to the third issue of *Grip* – a magazine that is written for teens by teens. Using the unique voices of Alberta's youth, we give a fresh perspective on life's issues, delivered in such a way that you, as a teen, get the message.

This issue of *Grip* is all about that – getting your messages across to other people, whether it's your best friend, your mom or your math teacher. Isn't it ironic that with so many new ways to communicate nowadays, it can still be so difficult to get your point across? Cell phones, computers, PDAs and blogs make it easy to stay in touch. But if you think about it, they are just communication tools used to deliver your message. You still need the know-how to communicate clearly.

As the parent of a 20-something daughter and son, I have experienced my fair share of miscommunication. I remember a time when I practically needed a glossary to find out how their day at school was. (Exactly what is 'chillaxing' anyway?) Having read through this issue of *Grip*, I can certainly identify with some of the stories. Topics range from a He Said/She Said perspective from a mother and son; the difficulties of getting your message across when you have a speech impediment to how it feels to have depression. Also check out the stories on grad fashions and an intriguing edible delight called The Doughnut Burger.

After reading this issue, I'm sure you'll be inspired to speak up and share your unique perspective. One way to do that is to join *Grip's* Youth Advisory Council. The Council provides advice and direction on what exactly goes into *Grip*. If you're between the ages of 13 to 18, head over to the *Grip* website at www.griponlife.ca. While you're there, share your opinions and communicate with youths from across the province.

Enjoy the third issue of *Grip*. Then go out and be heard.

Ray Block
President and CEO
Alberta Mental Health Board

We're looking for applications from teens to be members of our youth advisory council for future issues of our magazine. Visit griponlife.ca for details.

grip

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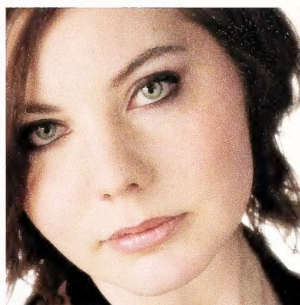
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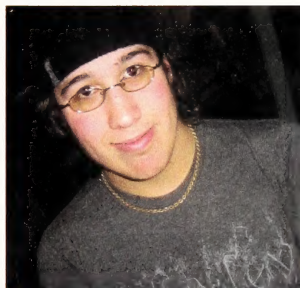


Lana Hall, 18, who wrote the feature on "making yourself heard," has no trouble raising her voice. Whether she's volunteering her reporting skills or ranting to strangers, Lana makes her opinions known. She plans to study journalism at Ryerson University in Toronto and wants to travel the world. Her ultimate pet peeve is people who purposely avoid global events. She eats

her ice cream unadorned and drinks her espressos extra hot, and when she isn't doodling or writing poetry about strange people on the bus, she's reading everything she can find by Hunter S. Thompson.



Before you buy your grad outfit, make sure you read **Stephanie Jones'** story to learn the ins and outs of this year's prom styles. **Jarrod Weisner**, 18, took some time away from working on his Camaro and watching Discovery shows about hippopotamuses to write a personal essay on living with a stutter. And you won't want to miss **Scaachi Koul's** stellar piece of satire on the doughnut burger, though you'll probably want to pass on the doughnut burger itself.



Simon Ritchie lives in Edmonton, an excellent place to engage in one of his favourite pastimes: building sand castles in the snow. He loves to write fiction and songs, and hopes that, one day, his writing will affect the world in a positive way. He admits that his favourite vices are singing when he knows he can't and being a goof in public. He doesn't like

reality television, because none of it is real. He does like "Looking for a Hero" by David Boyd, because of the reality of his fiction.

Roped Into Fun

An elite jump rope team, the Camrose Spirals prove that skipping rope isn't just for little kids

By Alyssa Knoop

The Camrose Spirals is a competitive skipping team. Participants learn leadership, dedication and fitness. One of the team's coaches, Janine Carroll, spoke about her work.

Grip: Who are the Camrose Spirals and what do they do?

Janine: We are a skipping team in Camrose that participates in skipping competitions and demonstrations.

Grip: How is it different from the skipping that kids do in the schoolyard?

Janine: Organization is the difference. The athletes spend time learning skills and tricks and incorporating them into a "freestyle routine," a 45- to 75-second choreographed skipping number. On a team, there are several people doing the same routine. There are four events in the individual competition, in the categories of speed, endurance, power and freestyle. In team competitions there are eight events.

Grip: Can anyone join? What expectations do you have?

Janine: Yes. Our expectations are that you attend practices, have fun and give it your best.

Grip: Have you won any competitions?

Janine: Yes, definitely. We are right now the top team in Alberta! We happen to have some very dedicated athletes on the same team and have travelled, competed and demonstrated extensively and trained hard.

Grip: Who do you compete against and where do they come from?

Janine: We compete against about 10 other teams throughout Alberta. Skipping is on the rise and there are international competitions



every second year and continental competitions, too.

Grip: How long have the Camrose Spirals been together?

Janine: About 13 or 14 years.

Grip: How do you prepare for competitions?

Janine: We practice two times a week, and get the kids to go over the events that will be in the competitions.

Grip: Are there mostly girls or boys?

Janine: There are mostly girls at the moment. That's changing as skipping gains popularity.

Grip: What is the age group?

Janine: I'd say between Grade 1 and Grade 12. When kids graduate and go to college, they usually are unable to keep coming because they are too far away.

Grip: How often do you practice and where?

Janine: We practice in a school gym two times a week, but when we approach bigger competitions, we try to practice four or five times a week.

Grip: What are your goals?


Janine: To bring the sport of skipping to more communities. That would be great. Some of our athletes are hoping to go to the British Virgin Islands to the PanAm competition and camp this summer.

Grip: How much does it cost to be a part of the Camrose Spirals?

Janine: Well, the recreation classes cost \$40 each season, which is twice a year. For the

competitive program it costs about \$200 from September to May, including the uniform and jump rope.

Grip: Where can people come and watch you?

Janine: We do demonstrations at basketball games and other gatherings and associations, and people can visit our website, which is www.camrospirals.com 

Meet the Players

Jonathan, Camrose Spiral, age 13

"My Grade 5 teacher was a coach and got me involved. This is my fourth year. I like to travel around with the team even though sometimes it can be kind of stressful. A high point was when we skipped at the World Competition. That was really cool."

Jody, Camrose Spiral, age 16

"Skipping looked interesting and fun and I thought I might give it a try. Now I've been in it for six years. I love doing freestyle, and the routines and demos... there isn't really anything I don't like about it. The World Competition was definitely my favourite skipping memory."

The Resources

Just Jump: www.justjump.ca

The Canadian Rope Skipping Federation: www.crsf.net

The Camrose Spirals: www.camrospirals.com

The International Rope Skipping Federation: www.irsf.org

How to Get Your Driver's Licence

(Or: How to go over to your friend's house without begging your parents to take you)

By Teresa Kwon



"Mom, can you drive me to my friend's house, please? I'll clean my room! No, I'll clean the entire house! Please?"

If this sounds familiar, you probably can't wait to get your driver's licence. We all want to be able to drive ourselves to work, school or to the mall without having to beg our parents. But getting behind the wheel isn't as straightforward as it used to be. It takes between two and three years to become a fully licenced driver.

"I got my learner's licence in July of 2005," says Gillian McCarron. "You can pick up the learner's licence book from any Alberta Registry, Alberta Motor Association, or on the Internet. When you've completed the test, you receive your results right after you finish writing. There's only 20 multiple-choice questions and you need the score of 17 out of 20 or better to pass. If you pass, they issue your licence on the spot."

One of the difficult restrictions to keep in mind, says Gillian, is that you must have a fully licenced driver accompany you while you are driving. She recommends visiting the government website to get more information about the handbook and to practise tests.

Get your hands on the wheel

To get your learner's licence (stage one), you must meet the entry requirements. First, you must be 14 years of age or older, pass a vision and knowledge test, and have parental consent if you're under 18 years of age.

Step #1: Learner's Conditions (Class 7)

You must hold a Class 7 for at least one year. You must be accompanied by a fully licenced driver 18 years of age or older and sitting in the front passenger seat. You may not drive between midnight and 5 a.m., may not carry more passengers than seat belts available, and must have a zero alcohol level.

Step #2: Probationary Driver

A probationary driver must be at least 16 years old and pass a Class 5 road test. Most of the conditions are similar to learner's conditions, but you must spend two years as a probationary driver, and you can't serve as an accompanying driver to someone else at this stage.

Step #3: The Last Stage (Class 5)

To become a fully licenced driver, you must be at least 18, have been suspension-free for the last year of the two-year probationary stage, and pass an advanced road test. Other than that, congratulations!

Things To Know

Drivers licenced under the Graduated Driver License Program (GDL) are restricted from driving a vehicle when any amount of alcohol is consumed.

If you get caught, your licence will be automatically suspended for one month.

Visit www.saferoads.com for more detailed information on the **Graduated Licensing Program** and information on driver and vehicle safety

Are you planning to get your **learner's licence** and still have no clue where to get the information to study? Visit www.infratrans.gov.ab.ca. They provide online information to starting from licence qualifications, traffic controls, starting your vehicle, intersections, turns and more.

Graduation of Another Kind

The Alberta government introduced graduated licensing in May 2003. It was designed to **create a lower risk** environment for new drivers and provide them with more driving skills and experience. According to the Alberta Traffic Safety Progress Report, young drivers contribute disproportionately to **traffic safety statistics**. Young drivers between the ages of 16 and 19 represent about 5% of all licence holders but are involved in nearly 13% of all fatal highway crashes.

Baffled by Ruffles

Let your individuality shine through at your grad without looking like an oddball – unless, of course, that's the look you're going for

By Stephanie Jones

After years of dealing with overflowing lockers, endless homework and yawn-inducing teachers, it's finally just around the corner: graduation. And with it comes the prom, a time when orchids and wallflowers alike swap their denim for silk. The ideal grad outfit will complete what will be, for some, the most spectacular night of their lives. This year's grads are crushing stereotypes and taking the first leap into independence. They're letting their creativity and individuality flourish! Here are the outfits your peers are adoring – and dissing – for this year's prom.

Frills and Thrills: Girls' Gear

Kristiane Singh, Store Manager of the Bridal Centre in Calgary, says "The biggest thing for the upcoming year is always what has been the biggest trend in bridal fashion for the months leading up to the Grad season." With over 700 dresses brought into the store every year, Singh has seen her share of ruffles and chiffon.

The Princess

"For 2007, the biggest trend was what is called a pick-up skirt," says Singh. "This is the kind of dress that has the fabric billowing from the waist down that is pinned up in various spots, sometimes using fancy brooches or crystal embellishment." She also mentions that "multi-layer tulle ball gown styles" are popular with girls who want to look like the picture perfect princess.



The Innovator

"I was inspired by the flappers of the 1920s," says Jesse Nich, 17. "I'm a huge fan of fashion from that era, so I felt that that sort of style would be perfect for grad." Playing with colour is also important for innovators such as Nich. Singh says people

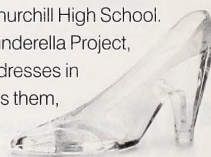


who want to be really different can pick a unique colour that may not suit everyone, but looks fantastic on them.

The Minimalist

"[This is] the girl who wants to look good without going over the top. They usually stay away from anything with lots of beadwork or frills, and opt for the simplicity," says Singh. Strapless dresses are a perfect choice for the minimalist. Singh assures people that a properly-made strapless dress is very comfortable.

In fact, one of the favourite styles for girls involved in the Cinderella Project has been "strapless dresses, fitted in the waist and torso," says Lynne Herman, a fashion studies teacher at Calgary's Sir Winston Churchill High School. Herman also runs the Cinderella Project, a program that collects dresses in good condition, modifies them, and donates them to deserving girls.



Cute in Suits: Guy's Gear

The emphasis that females place on flair and personality doesn't seem to have transcended gender barriers. While the girls can articulate why they chose their grad outfits – from the

Outstanding Leader

If it's true that Ryan Hodgson learns by doing, then he must have learned an awful lot, because he's been busy

Chelsea Dufresne

Ryan Hodgson was born and raised on a farm in rural Alberta, but he's no hillbilly. And he thinks everyone should know that the "inbred hillbilly stereotype" has gone the way of the dodo bird.

As one of 14 ambassadors in Alberta for 4-H, this 18-year-old promotes and encourages enrollment in the "learn to do by doing" program that aims to teach leadership, personal development and public speaking through agriculturally-based activities.

And in recognition of his outstanding leadership, last year Ryan was chosen from 132 other candidates to receive the highest award pos-

sible in 4-H: the Premier Award.

Ryan says that 4-H had a large effect on his aspirations in agriculture and ranching. He joined the Millarville Stockland 4-H Beef Club when he was nine years old, and he says one of the most satisfying aspects of the club was the friends he met. Even at that age, he'd already been showing and raising cattle with his family, so taking on projects with 4-H wasn't a stretch.

Ryan is an active supporter of the beef industry. Witnessing the effects of the BSE crisis on other ranchers hit home. (The border to the United States was closed to Canadian cattle and beef products when a few animals sick with

length to the amount of skin showing to the colour to the person who inspired them – the guys usually want to keep it simple. However, guys can still show off their unique personalities through simple styles.

The Penguin

Though many teenaged boys' responses to what they're going to wear on grad night is "whatever falls out of the closet," lots of them admit they want to look sharp for the occasion, and a tuxedo fits the bill. Inspiration for this style includes movies such as *Casino Royale*, *Reservoir Dogs* and *the Godfather*. Wearing this trend, any guy can pull off looking suave and sophisticated.



The Gangsta

"For the past couple of years, we have had a lot of requests for pinstripes," says Singh. "I think they feel more like it is a cross

between a suit and a tuxedo that has a little more jazz to it."

To add to this look, try wearing a fancy fedora, (à la Al Capone) a bowler hat, a bright striped or polka-dot tie, or – for a more modern look – slipping your gums into some gleaming grills. That's right: tooth decoration for the young grad has arrived.

The Oddball

This is the category where the Napoleon Dynamites and Duckies (*Pretty in Pink*, 1986) of our generation get to strut their stuff. "Our big request is always baby blue jackets and ruffled shirts," Singh says. "They must be kidding though – their dates would kill them!" Angry dates or no, if you really want to turn heads and inspire laughs wherever you go, this style is for you. ☒



Don't You Dare

After years of tromping down linoleum hallways spotted with chewing gum, you may be tempted to go all out. But there are a few fashions you should avoid in your quest to dress for success.

V-necks – Too deep a V and you'll be afraid to reach for the salt, lest the twins escape.

Ruffles – Leave the window dressings in the window this year.

Poof – If you want poof, keep it in your skirt, not in your sleeves, your shoulders and especially not in your hair.

80s dresses – The giant retro shoulder pads are edgy for an oddball weekday or party look, but not yet for the formal occasion of grad.

Sequins – A flourish or two is fine but unless your dress is something special you might look like a fish out of water who's dropping its scales.

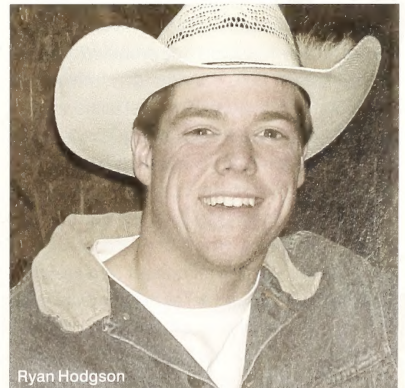
Too much skin or midriff – Baring shoulders and arms is classy but too much belly and butt cleavage don't belong.

a brain disease were found.) "It was a very tragic loss for some ranchers, having to sell out three- or four-generation farms," he says. The border closure was a large holdup, something farmers still face to this day. But Hodgson stayed positive. "It's one of those things – it's like drought," Hodgson says. "It happens, but you can get past it."

Since the BSE crisis hit, there has been a partial opening of the U.S. border to younger Canadian cattle. Achieving a wider opening to our beef is also one of Ryan's goals. "Obviously it's not something I can do alone, but something I'd like to see within the next five years," he says.

In September he'll attend Red Deer College and plans to transfer to the University of Alberta to study agriculture. When he isn't working on his family's farm or trying to make Canadians more agriculturally aware, he enjoys fishing, hockey and rugby. After he finishes university, he'd like to pursue work in the egg industry. With strong motivation to chase his dreams, in addition to his down-to-earth personality, there is no doubt he can do whatever he sets his mind to.

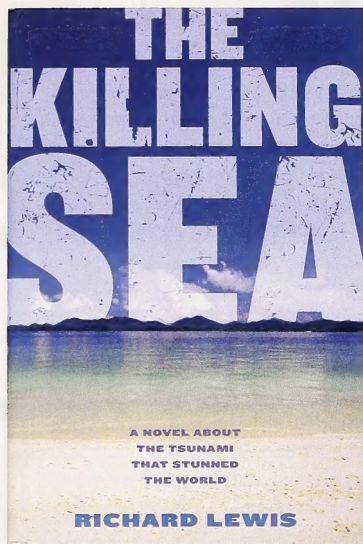
"It's hard work – one of those things you can't do unless you really love it," Ryan says. "But I can't picture myself being behind a desk all day, and this is what I love to do." ☒



Ryan Hodgson

Big Brain Books

Turn off the monitor, unplug the X-Box and exercise your right to read



The Killing Sea by Richard Lewis

REVIEWED BY PAIGE PARSONS

On the verge of the devastating tsunami of 2004, Ruslan, an Indonesian teenage boy, and Sarah, an American teenager on vacation with her family, are brought together by a chance encounter. Both teens are separated from their families when the tsunami hits. Fate pairs them as they embark on a journey to save Sarah's brother and find Ruslan's father. Along the way they must overcome multiple dangers, from a wild jungle to murderous rebels, and even the Indonesian military. As the pair battles for survival, they develop a close friendship that leads to a better understanding of their different cultures, and of themselves. Lewis doesn't sugar-coat the graphic details of the disaster or the desperation and tragedy that victims of the tsunami faced. In using characters that teens can identify with, the author raises awareness among youth on important issues.

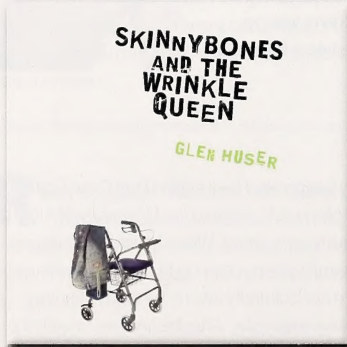
Grade: A *This informative read has an exhilarating plot that will keep your attention.*

Skinnybones and the Wrinkle Queen

by Glen Huser

REVIEWED BY ALLISON RENDER

Tamara Tierney is a 15-year-old aspiring model living in Edmonton. When she discovers a week-long summer modelling course that promises "a ticket to major work in the field," she knows this is what she has to do. The problem? The course costs \$2,500 – far more than Tamara can possibly afford. The only person she knows who has enough money is Miss Barclay, an 89-year-old woman she met at the local senior's home where Tamara volunteers. Luckily for Tamara, Miss Barclay has her own dream: to see the entirety of Wagner's "Ring Cycle" of operas. She agrees to pay for the course if Tamara will drive her to Seattle and act as her companion along the way. After they both take in the opera, they'll head to Vancouver for Tamara's modelling course. Their secret plan seems foolproof. But of



course, there's a catch – they simply can't stand each other!

Grade: A *Huser takes a typical road trip story and adds a unique flair. Tamara and Miss Barclay make an entertaining duo. There is a remarkable depth to this story of unlikely friends.*



Tattoo by Jennifer Lynn Barnes

REVIEWED BY SAMANTHA MARCELLIN

Bailey is an average girl with nothing going for her besides her three best friends and a huge hopeless crush on Mr. Eye Candy. Growing up with "the Tomboy," "the Girly-Girl" and "the Nerd," Bailey wonders why she can't seem to fit into a category. Everything changes one fateful day at the mall when the four friends find a mysterious kiosk decorated with elaborate trinkets. Bailey chooses a package of temporary tattoos, and shortly after they all apply one, they are thrust into a world of magic and destiny. With each of the girls acquiring a new fantastic ability, like being able to read minds and predict the future, the signs that they are being used for a higher purpose become clear. Voices and visions lead them to their first taste of the evil, and they must prepare to work together to restore the balance of good and evil, life and death. Can these urban teens manage to save the world before their curfews run out?

Grade: B+ *This spellbinding page-turner is full of surprise and suspense. Although it can be difficult to take their excessive use of the words "like" and "OMG" seriously, it's hard not to fall in love with their infectious personalities.*

More Better Movies

Spend your tenner on the right flick this spring. No sense wasting it on a sucker



The Prestige

REVIEWED BY MEGAN RYLAND

In *The Prestige*, a tragic event turns two aspiring magicians into enemies and sets in motion a string of acts that lead to a brilliant, dramatic conclusion. Hugh Jackman plays Robert Angier, a man obsessed with ruining the life of fellow magician Alfred Borden, whom he believes ruined his life. Borden (Christopher Bale) strikes back, and they struggle to one-up one another in evermore violent and humiliating ways (which are partly responsible for the PG-13 rating). Scarlett Johansson, Michael Caine, Rebecca Hall and many others provide performances that add layers of mystery and intrigue. *The Prestige* ends with a final act of magic that makes its finish truly worthy of applause.

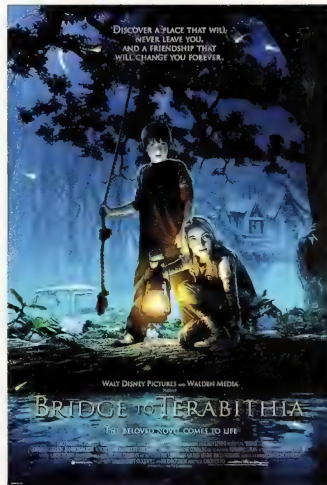
Grade: A An excellent film, but as with all good magic tricks, be prepared to watch closely.

Bridge to Terabithia

REVIEWED BY SAM RIDGWAY

Bridge to Terabithia is the story of Leslie and Jess, two fifth grade outsiders who use their imaginations to escape from bullies and create a better world. When Leslie moves in down the street from Jess – who is the fastest runner around – she promptly beats him in the boys' race. Still, brought together by a love for art and adventure, their friendship grows. With AnnaSophia Robb as Leslie and Josh Hutcherson as Jess, it's a great cast, and the script, based on the book by Katherine Paterson, is stellar. Just make sure you bring a few tissues – life in Terabithia is not entirely sunshine.

Grade: A While this story is told through the eyes of 10-year-olds, it's sophisticated enough to appeal to all ages.



Music and Lyrics

REVIEWED BY PAIGE PARSONS

Drew Barrymore and Hugh Grant star in this hilarious romantic comedy about Alex Fletcher (Grant), a washed-up 1980s pop star, and Sophie Fisher (Barrymore), a somewhat neurotic aspiring writer. The unlikely pair come together to write a hit song that could be the key to Alex's comeback to money and fame. As the song develops, so does a romantic spark between Alex and Sophie. This feel-good flick will have you singing its praises.

Grade: B+ Like most romantic comedies, this film has a predictable plot. But the witty dialogue and excellent soundtrack place it a level above what you might expect from this genre.

Make More Music

There's loads of good stuff out on deck this spring. Find out what you shouldn't miss and what you shouldn't touch

Ghost Stories by Chantal Kreviazuk, Sony Music

REVIEWED BY GRACE GRUNDY



Chantal Kreviazuk's fourth album, *Ghost Stories*, tells a haunting story of unrequited love and... unrequited love. Apart from the standout hit song "All I Can Do", the rest of the album lacks variety in tempo, style and message. Even Kreviazuk's considerable talent on the piano is overpowered by the predictable style and melody. The one bright spot in the album, "Wonderful," captures you with its upbeat tune, providing a nice break from the other lacklustre songs, and the melody is both relaxing and intriguing.

Grade: C *The repetition is monotonous, but if you're a die-hard Kreviazuk fan, this album is perfect.*

A Decade by Our Lady Peace, Sony Music

REVIEWED BY SAMANTHA MARCELLIN

Our Lady Peace's seventh full album proves that they aren't going away anytime soon. Their latest is a flashback to the tracks that made them so well known. The songs range from a powerful rock sound, such as "Where Are You," to a dreamlike calm in "Thief." The lyrics bring a fresh reality to problems that are being faced in our world. As a showcase of the best they have to offer, this album offers something for old fans as well as new. It includes two previously unreleased tracks and comes with DVD extras of a full concert and the lyrics to every OLP song ever released.

Grade: A *If you like powerful music, this album will have you humming for days.*



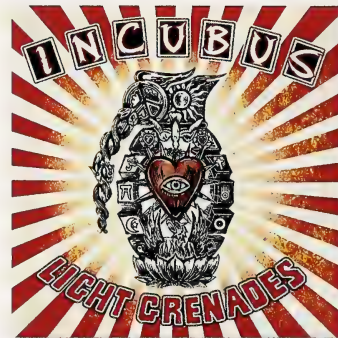
Skin and Bones by the Foo Fighters, Sony BMG

REVIEWED BY MATTHEW OSIPOVAS

The Foo Fighters' first live album offers a fresh take on some of their best tracks. In 2006, the band teamed up with Pat Smear, Rami Jaffee on keyboard, violinist Petra Haden and percussionist Drew Hester to put a twist on classics like "Best of You" and "Over and Out."

People who enjoyed the high-powered instrumentals and prominent vocals of *In Your Honor* may not enjoy *Skin and Bones* as much. But those of you who enjoy the mellower side of the Foo Fighters will welcome Dave Grohl's moving, soothing vocals in songs such as "My Hero" and "Everlong." It's a new Foo Fighters flavour.

Grade: B *Though it's a bit soft on the ear, Skin and Bones is a great live album.*



Light Grenades by Incubus, Sony BMG

REVIEWED BY MATTHEW OSIPOVAS

Light Grenades is a solid album that adopts musical styles from all over the Rock genre. Much of the album's strengths are due to lead vocalist Brandon Boyd and Mike Einziger on lead guitar. And without Chris Kilmore, the turntablist and man in charge of sound effects, Incubus wouldn't have their distinct sound. Songs like "Diamonds and Coal" and "Light Grenades" may fool you into thinking that they're classics from bands like Rush and Guns'n'Roses, but both quickly turn into high-powered, upbeat songs that will have you tapping your foot.

Grade: A *Great for anyone who enjoys the rock genre and is looking for something new.*



Are you an Anime-niac?

Check out the latest graphic novel adventures from the land that spawned the comic book revolution, and one from the man who reimagined Batman

Alita Battle Angel : Last Order, Angel's Vision Story by Yukito Kishiro

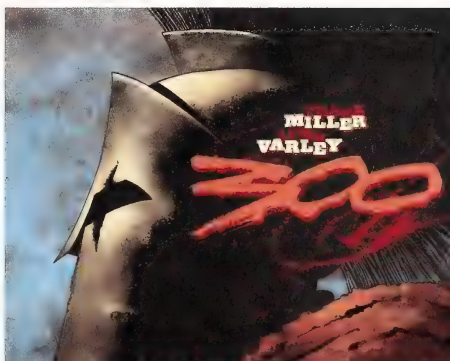
REVIEWED BY JUSTIN FORTH

Angel's Vision is the eighth tankbon (chapter) in the *Alita Battle Angel* series. It is a fast paced action manga built in the image of a future Dystopian earth, where Earth is plummeted into permanent winter by a meteor crash. This eighth installment of the series tells the background story of the vampire Vilma and her struggle to survive on the frozen wasteland. It also further develops the struggle that the vampires have in coexisting with human beings.

Grade: C+ *Without background information on this series, this tankbon is very confusing. The author's writing style is fairly plain and feels rushed in some parts.*

300 by Frank Miller

REVIEWED BY GRAYSON EVANS



300 is the hardcover graphic novel about a real Spartan battle against the Persians (Thermopylae) in 480 B.C. that inspired the recently released motion picture. The graphic novel was inspired by the 1962 movie *The 300 Spartans*, which the novelist Frank Miller saw as a child. Miller is a famous comic book artist who is best known for writing *Sin City*, which was made into the 2005 movie with the same name. He has also drawn comics for DC Comics (Batman). The graphic novel has amazing pictures and an

amazing plot, telling the story of how 300 soldiers held back a force of Persians for three days, helping the Greeks win the Greco-Persian War.

Grade: A+ *Although this book is very short you won't be disappointed.*



Bleach by Tite Kubo

REVIEWED BY MATTHEW OSIPOVAS

Ichigo Kurosaki is a normal 15-year-old student – except for the fact that he sees ghosts. His life is uneventful, unless you count being awoken by your father jumping feet first into your face as an event. But then he encounters Rukia, a soul reaper. It's her job to send bad ghosts, called hollows, to hell and dead people, called wholes, to the Soul Society – the good spirit world. After encountering Rukia, Ichigo is thrust into a world where the hollows try to devour his soul. He must defend his friends, family and other innocent souls from being eaten by hollows, too. Tite Kubo, the comic artist behind *Bleach*, has a style quite similar to the one found in *Naruto*, but, within this anime, more emphasis is placed on the characters' expression with the use of detail, and during action scenes Gaussian blur and warping helps the audience to understand the action. *Bleach* is available on DVD and serialized graphic novels.

Grade: A *Bleach has it all: the comedy, action and usual demon fighting you expect to see in today's anime.*



Deathnote Volume 8: Target Story by Tsugumi Ohba, Art by Takeshi Obata

REVIEWED BY JUSTIN FORTH

Have you ever considered the power of writing? What if what you wrote could kill someone? Light Yagami, a bored 17-year-old genius, realizes such a reality when a "Deathnote" – a notebook that kills someone when you write their name in it – is dropped into his world. This book is the eighth "tankbon" (a collection of chapters from a series) of this critically acclaimed manga, which has sold over 20 million copies in Japan. This tankbon depicts Light's struggle to retrieve another Deathnote in the human world. With its religious symbolism and an enjoyable "if only..." plot, this story could be enjoyed by almost any reader.

Grade: A *If you want to fully understand the story, you should consider reading the preceding tankbon, but the story is interesting without it.*

It's Good to Play Together

OK, OK, enough with the books and movies. It's time to bust out the games and play

REVIEWED BY GRAYSON EVANS

Game: Dead Rising
Platform: Xbox 360
Rating: M for Mature
Players: 1

Dead Rising is a mindless zombie-killing game, which is fun after the first 30 minutes. Before that, the game has not too many weapons or many zombies, so you have to wait for the action to get good.

Even though it's one of the goriest games going, it is surprisingly funny; the setting is a shopping mall so, while you're chasing and killing zombies, you can try on and wear the clothes for sale in the stores. (When you look around the mall you will find that there are a large variety of weapons available too.) There are, though, many flaws in this game: you can only save after you beat the first boss and the AI characters are really stupid in the way they go out of their way to kill zombies. On the positive side, you have to follow a main character, but if you accidentally kill him, you can still play.

Hint: When you leave the mall to go into the park as you walk past the pond there will be two benches; there is a sickle on one of them. Grab it.

Grade: C *A little slow at first, but has its funny points.*

Game: Me & My Katamari
Platform: PSP
Rating: E for everyone
Players: 1-2

This game is very difficult to play on the PSP, which is the only platform it's available on. The two other games in this series, *Katamary Damacy* and *We Love Katamari*, are available on Playstation 2 and, since PS2 uses one analog stick, you have to use the bottom pad on the PSP in the new game. This game has a weird story and main character, a prince who has to roll up things on Earth for the King of the cosmos who accidentally blew up all the stars. Even though the PSP isn't the best platform for the game, it has great game-play because you spend most of your time rolling stuff – including cows, cars and more – up into a huge ball.

Hint: Watch the tutorial

Grade: B *It's a lot of fun and is a very good kids' game if you are looking for a non-shooting game.*

Bulletin Board



You're Wearing That?
 Understanding Mothers
 and Daughters in
 Conversation, by
 Deborah Tannen,
 author of "You Just
 Don't Understand"

*IMPORTANT
 website!

gripsonlife.ca



***VOLUNTEER!**

and build the old CV
www.volunteeralberta.ab.ca

Click "volunteer centres" and
 "directory" to find a volunteer
 centre in your area.

Global Youth Service Day
 April 20 - 22, 2007

Celebrate the contributions of youth
 volunteers all over the world. It's the
 largest youth-led volunteering event
 in the world - over 150 countries and
 34 international organizations take
 part.

Whoever said "Sticks and
 stones may break your
 bones, but words will never
 hurt you," obviously couldn't
 hear.

*Check out how the cervical cancer vaccine works:
health.howstuffworks.com

Bored?

Find out something interesting every day. **itotd.com**

thehammer.ca has satire like it's s'posed to be.

Political cartoons are funny. Seriously.
markfiore.com

Getting out of the gene pool:
darwinawards.com

The Decline and Fall of Western Civilisation as Seen Through the Medium of JELLO™
lileks.com/institute/gallery/jello

The Adventures of Strongbad & Friends
homestarrunner.com

*Check out
Channell02.net
- 5 minute TV
shows from
New York City

I shall seize Fate by
the throat; it shall
certainly not bend
and crush me
completely.
- Ludwig van
Beethoven, letter to
F G Wegeler, 1801

Kids & Teens Resource
for Health & Fitness:
toneteen.com

Read 'em:

**The Curious Incident
of the Dog in the
Night-time**
by Mark Haddon

His Dark Materials
box set
by Philip Pullman

Black Swan Green
by David Mitchell

*Rent

1. My Bodyguard
 2. Groundhog Day
- Total classics!

"Actually '78 was a really
exciting time for U2. We had
just discovered F sharp minor.
So we had the fourth chord
and we'd only had three up to
then." - Bono on U2's early days

*Kid's Help Phone

1-888-668-6868
www.kidshelpphone.ca

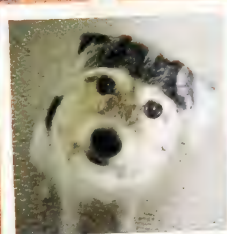
*A winner!

Ashley Foesier won Anita Daher's
draw in the last issue
of Grip.
She gets a copy of Anita's
new book, Spider's Song.

*"Never Good Enough"

A song by Rachel
Ferguson about a
teenage girl's struggle
with an eating disorder.
LISTEN online: **www.
myspace.com/
rachelfergusonmusic**

888000
**SPECIAL
EVENT**
ADMIT ONE



The Doughnut Burger

You just don't have time to down chips and a chocolate bar. Don't worry, the Doughnut Burger has arrived

By Scaachi Koul



Oftentimes I stand before my refrigerator at dinnertime, indecisive and starving. I crave a hearty meal, but I'm also impatient for dessert. It's then that I remember the perfect solution – the Doughnut Burger.

From the moment Christopher Sell accidentally dropped his Twinkie into bubbling fish batter and created the Deep Fried Twinkie, people have searched for ways to fuse two delicious dishes into a single item. But the perfect meal has continued to elude us – until now.

The Gateway Grizzlies, a minor league baseball team in Sauget, Illinois, has created what may be the most brilliant foodstuff since Spam. The Doughnut Burger combines the goodness of a bacon cheeseburger with a Krispy Kreme original glazed doughnut. That's right – our society is finally advanced enough to combine ground beef and doughnuts.

The beef, bacon, and glazed dough concoction packs a satisfying punch of 45 grams of fat and 1,000 calories. Tony Funderburg, general manager of the Gateway Grizzlies, boasts that at \$4.50, this burger is a bargain – you get dinner and dessert.

The first time I try the burger, I'm quickly won over. The cheese glistens under fluorescent lights, the beef drips with grease, and the glazed

doughnut melts beneath the hot patty.

As I sink my teeth into the Doughnut Burger, the smooth glaze of the Krispy Kreme caresses my tongue. As I continue my journey, my teeth get caught in a beautiful mess of cheddar cheese. Then I hear a sudden crunch. At first I think I have bitten a thumbtack, but I am simply enjoying two slices of crispy, salty bacon. Savoring the brackish, sweet delight, my teeth encounter the pièce de résistance – the beef patty. Then I'm back to the doughnut's sugary goodness.

I've always tried to combine daily chores to save time. I put toothpaste on my scrambled eggs, I do my homework with chocolate chips so I can eat while working, and I sit with my family while I sleep so that I can spend time with them. But I've never seen such a great timesaver as the Doughnut Burger.

But the burger will do more than shorten meal times. The appearance of the Doughnut Burger must mean that a food revolution isn't far off. Finally, there may be a day where we no longer have to eat in moderation, and we can throw all those cholesterol and heart attack warnings into the wind and become the morbidly obese country we've always dreamed of. From chocolate covered pretzels to marshmallows dipped

in caramel with an artificial cherry filling, we've been waiting for something like this to prove to the world, "We're here! We're gluttonous! And we're keeping Blue Cross in business!"

Why feel guilty about eating 17 number-five combos from Dairy Queen? Who do we need to answer to about our girth between mouthfuls of extra cheese pizza? Many ask why we continue to make foods with such a high fat content when obesity rates are soaring. Well, I question the facts. Did the CBC have a bone to pick with the Doughnut Burger when it reported in 2004 that 29 per cent of children are either overweight or morbidly obese, and that 56 per cent of adults have weight problems? The CBC fails to mention how good this food is.

Broke up with your boyfriend? Well, you've got three good men in a Three Musketeers! Failed a math exam? Put that textbook down and pick up this guide on how to eat Double Stuffed Oreos! Suppressing pain about the fact that your father never hugged you, your inability to find Mr. Right? Who needs to stress? I've got Mr. Christie. ☒

For real nutritional advice check out:
hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index_e.html



Dude, They Don't Get You

You've tried to explain to your **fossils** why you need to stay out **later** on weekends. It's really not for you – it's for your **friends**. They stay out late and you **don't** want to **crap** on their **party**. And your **sister** – you've told her every way **possible** to leave your hoodies **alone**. She doesn't get it. Your **girlfriend** is forever moping about some **imagined** injustice. Then there was the time your **teacher** saw you **wrestling** with your **buddy** and suspended you for **bullying**. Bullying? You and your buddy both tried to **explain**, but you may as well have been speaking **Swahili**.

Sometimes it's like nobody gets you.

You Just Don't Understand Me

On feeling misunderstood; The art of debate; What you don't get about depression; Quiz: What kind of fighter are you? PLUS: Top 10 ways to be heard

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Perspectives on Understanding

Grace Under Pressure

A stutter can't clutter speedy thoughts

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Twin Truths

Friends to foes in just 10 seconds flat

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He Said, She Said

Grayson, his mom and one messy room

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On Feeling Misunderstood

Lacey Morris climbs out of her silo, reconnects with the world and reflects on her isolation

By Lacey Morris

When your head is clouded with school-work and peer pressure, it's easy to feel abandoned in a vast world of deep emotions and complex new ideas. Your friends are caught up in their own lives and your parents are pretty much creatures from a different planet, so it's easy to feel alone and misunderstood. To make matters worse, people try to assure you that they understand where you're coming from. *But how can anyone who isn't me possibly understand what I am going through?*

The fact is they can't. But they can relate. As cliché as it sounds, most of the issues you struggle with are common to other teenagers. Everyone, at one point or another, is forced into a situation that can be difficult to come out of.

I remember being 13 and feeling as though I was reborn into a world of disappointments every day. I was just getting over my first breakup; I felt like I was stumbling around in the dark, trying to find some way to escape the heartache. I decided to try out for the school cheerleading team to release my frustrations in a productive way. I was thrilled when I made the team. But as the weeks went by, I started feeling as though I didn't belong there. I was a dark-haired, quiet girl trying to fit in with an overwhelming group of peppy, self-confident girls. So I quit the team. I came home from

school that day and when my mom asked what was wrong, I said:

"You wouldn't understand."

Soon after, I began shutting myself off from all school activities. I covered every inch of my body with baggy, dark clothes and started experimenting with drugs and alcohol. At one point I was cutting my skin. Eventually I told

How can anyone who isn't me possibly understand what I am going through?

my mom that I wanted to see a doctor, who arranged for therapy. I worried that treatment would supply me with temporary relief, and I feared relying on therapy for emotional stability. One thing that I was sure of at the time was that I didn't want false happiness; I wanted the real thing.

After the first few meetings with my doctor, I stopped talking. I was afraid to tell her how low I had sunk. I was ashamed because I knew I wasn't making very wise choices. I would go home and feel as though nothing had been accomplished. I felt completely hopeless. But eventually I started to open up and discuss my problems. It was nice to be listened to and to have advice and feedback. I felt as though a

heavy weight had been lifted from my shoulders. It was the first time that I actually gave some consideration to the fact that my peers and other people might have dealt with the same hardships I was dealing with.

My advice now is to approach your problems as a sort of universal calling card for all teens in distress. Instead of feeling as though you're completely alienated from the world, set aside time with a friend and talk. Help each other come up with some solutions instead of beating yourself up.

You want to help people understand you better, rather than pushing them away by emphasizing that they have no idea what you are going through.

Now that I look back, I realize that I should have allowed myself to be more open with other people. At the time I felt that if I started acting out I would draw attention to myself and maybe fit in somewhere. Deep down I knew that experimenting with dangerous substances and hurting myself wouldn't solve my problems. I realized that maybe the best thing for me would be to allow others to provide me with the advice and understanding I desperately needed. It turns out that sometimes other people really do understand. ■

10

Ways to Be Heard

You are tired of being just another teen. You want people to know who you are. You want to make an impact. Here's how

By Curtis Wendlandt

1. Virtual Soapbox: Websites such as Myspace and YouTube are running the show. Build a website and start an online community of your own. Go to your local bookstore, or go online for instructions. Try www.takeforum.com or www.invisionfree.com. A Google search using "create," "forum" and "easy" will introduce you to many others. Get your own soapbox and start foaming at the mouth.

2. Radio You: All you need is a play list and a reliable Internet connection for your very own online radio station. Make sure you have audio capability, a broadcaster, a server and a media player such as WinAmp or Windows Media Player. There are plenty of sites to get closer to your goal. Play the music you like when you like, spout off, and possibly be heard by people all over the world. **Resource:** http://music.lovetoknow.com/How_To_Start_An_Internet_Radio_Station

3. The Mighty Pen: If writing is your thing, people across the nation should have access to your brilliant ideas. Write and publish your own book. There are companies with technology that has made self-publishing much simpler and cheaper to create books that look as professional as any you'd find in Barnes & Noble. All you have to do is get writing; you can even use your new website to flog your new tome!

4. Run Away: If you're worried about all the suffering in the world – or at least at your school – run for school council. You'll learn salesmanship, bump up your debating skills, and

develop a practiced smile. By year's end, you just might have finally found funding for the skateboard park, not to mention the résumé-boosting factor. **Resource:** <http://www.wikihow.com/Become-Class-President>

5. Read All About It: Start a school newspaper. Are there any unsung writers, photographers or computer whizzes around you? A paper has the advantage of providing a forum for expression for the entire student body. Make a call for submissions (include a deadline) then get together with your team of supporters and have a first story meeting. Decide on the look and the content. You can find step-by-step guides on university and college websites and in the journalism section of your local library or bookstore.

6. Activate Yourself: Polar ice fields are melting and there is flooding in the Sahara. What's a budding activist to do? Start with a letter of demanding action on climate change. Write your Mayor, town councillor, or member of the Legislative Assembly. Heck, why not the Prime Minister? But you have to do it right. Make your argument clearly and include recommendations for putting your words into action. **Resource:** www.dwatch.ca

7. Channel Spielberg: Somewhere in your house is a small video camera full of 20 years' worth of Christmases. Get a few dedicated friends together and brainstorm movie ideas. You could even do an autobiography. Steven Spielberg made his first feature film at age 16 on super-8 film. Write a script, film it and enter your finished


product in a festival. There are even young filmmakers clubs you can join locally.

Resource: www.youngfilmmakers.org

8. Artful Dodger: You've got a closet filled with paintings and photos. Why not submit your artwork somewhere? Go to places where there's already art on the walls: coffee shops, salons and restaurants. You'll need a binder full of pictures to show off your stuff, maybe even a letter of intent to explain what it's all about. Use the Internet as your springboard. **Start showing your artwork:** artwanted.com, www.subvariance.com www.facebook.com

9. Show Off: You play a mean electric guitar. Your friend writes fantastic poetry. Your cousin has a band. Organize a show and use the event to raise funds for a cause, which is both noble and won't hurt with promotion. Publicize through popular websites. Call the local student or independent radio stations and start promoting your event.

10. Thespian Pursuits: Maybe you spend your days lurking around hallways in a cape waiting to deliver a monologue. Try starting a theatre group. If you want to take up a particular cause, there are agitprop troupes around the world to emulate. Go online for instructions on how to write and stage an original play from the ground up with your friends.

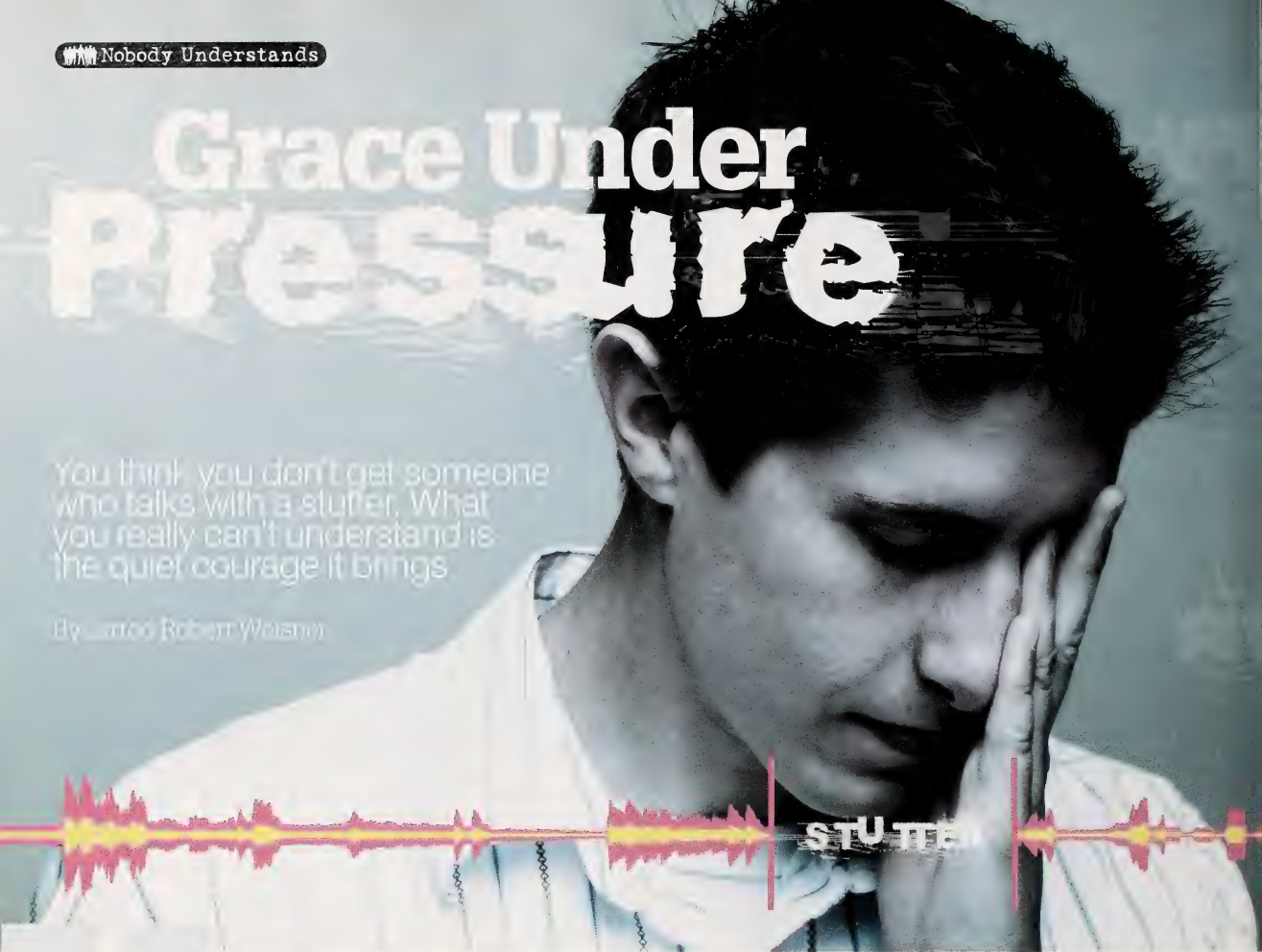
Resources: www.unitheatre.com/start.html www.ehow.com/how_135490_organize-a-munity-theater.html 



Grace Under Pressure

You think you don't get someone who talks with a stutter. What you really can't understand is the quiet courage it brings

By *Timothy Robert Weisman*



You are sitting in your Grade 4 classroom with the immortal words of E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web* in your hands. Sitting right next to you, your best friend reads the first paragraph of Chapter Four, and you know that something bad is coming. It's a feeling of complete and utter dread. The girl you have a crush on will never talk to you after this; you'll be singled out at recess on the playground. The comments and whispers in the classroom will come faster than a Hollywood divorce. But unlike the quick fade of a tabloid item, your issue will be there tomorrow, the day after and the day after that.

There is no cure and there is no direct sole cause for a stutter. It could be genetic, it could be genius or it could be nerves. Regardless, it's the effect you're always thinking about. You can't understand why anyone in the world would ever laugh at you for something you can't control. You're called upon in class to read a paragraph and you're stuck, stammering, stuttering, spitting out the words onto a blank canvas with missing letters and broken vowels.

When people say that Einstein didn't speak until he was nearly five years old, I think it was because he was thinking; examining. He was making his entrance. I never put together full sentences until I was four years old. I wasn't examining; I was struggling. For the past 18 years of my life, I have wanted to say more than I am able to. In English class, while discussing works by Hemingway or Nietzsche that I knew inside and out, I would never raise my hand for fear of not being able to turn the thoughts in my head into words out of my mouth. It's like being temporarily mute throughout your day and your self-esteem controls your speech. Einstein said what he had to when he wanted to, but stuttering throughout your life knocks you down so much that you come to believe you don't have anything to say anymore.

According to modern science, there's a pill for this. But with true stuttering, unrelated to social anxiety or stress of any kind, you're not only at a loss for words; it's in your head. As simply as I can put it without referencing specific neuro-

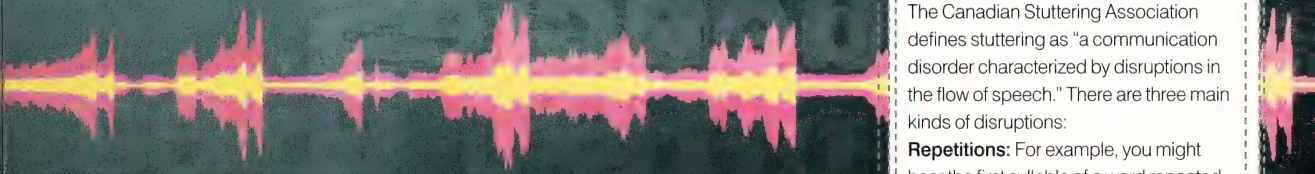
transmitters or flushed emotions, you're talking like a book. That is, your mind sees the pages, but your spoken words are trying to catch up to what you're reading. You're thinking too much, too fast, and all at once. This is where logic comes in. Through meetings with several speech pathologists that I have seen in my lifetime, there are some methods that work and some that don't. But it all depends on who you are.

The most popular method is the easiest to do. You read aloud to yourself in bed or at any time of the day, articles, books and poetry. Whenever you stutter or get stuck on a word, you take a deep breath, slowly pronounce the first letter of the word, almost slurring your speech, and until you finish that word, you don't stop. Repeating the word over and over isn't even necessary.

Then there's the tape-recorder method. You sit with the speech therapist and record yourself reading, stuttering as much as you want and not stopping. You then press the 'playback' button and hear yourself. Frankly, all that did for me was make me realize how much I sounded

Stuttering

is a disorder of fluency
characterized by involuntary
interruptions
in the flow of speech



like an idiot. It demoralized me even more than usual. It didn't help, and it never would, but the goal was for me to learn from my mistakes.

I don't think you can learn from your mistakes by restricting yourself so much that you worry about other people's opinions of how you present yourself day to day. You know you can't solve it, but you can help it. Stuttering is about finding your way in life; your way of doing things the way you want to. For the first years you will hold back, you will live by their standards and take a daily beating at the schoolyard because of it. If it doesn't give you a steel shell on the outside by the end of high school, nothing will.

I have come to understand how ignorant some people can be. I have been called all the names and insults you could imagine. They were ignorant, and unconsciously tried to take my childhood memories and throw them into the gutter. But they failed miserably. I am not afraid of speeches, of reading out loud, of talking in a grocery store, because I have the ultimate gift of a stutterer: grace under pressure.

It gives me courage in its most simplified yet complete form. I'll say it one last time: You just don't understand.

A stutter is not about expression or the lack of it. It's about people telling you what they think you can and can't do, and you telling them otherwise. It's a power they will never, ever understand. And on the bright side, there are a handful of women you'll meet along the way who will think it's adorable. ■

Tips For Understanding

- Look your friend in **the eye** and wait patiently for him to get the words out.
- **Don't finish** his sentences for him.
- Don't give advice such as "just relax." It won't help and will **just bug your friend**.
- Phone conversations are particularly tough. **Be patient** and listen carefully.

Beg Your Pardon?

The Canadian Stuttering Association defines stuttering as "a communication disorder characterized by disruptions in the flow of speech." There are three main kinds of disruptions:

Repetitions: For example, you might hear the first syllable of a word repeated, as in "mo-mo-mother."

Prolongations: People who stutter might hold the first sound in a word, as in "SSSSSteve."

Stoppages or blocks of airflow: You might be waiting during a prolonged pause for a person with a stutter to start the word, as in "---hello."

Some people who stutter have other behaviours such as eye rolling, lip tremor, head jerking or physical tension. Everyone is unique in this way. Severity of stutters varies widely among people and can be different in one person depending on the day or situation.

The Canadian Stuttering Association website says "about one per cent of the adult population and five per cent of children stutter. About 75 per cent of children who stutter outgrow it." Stuttering is four times more common in boys than girls.

Source: The Canadian Stuttering Association
www.stutter.ca

The Great Debate

Arm yourself with the skills and poise to win arguments. The art of debate means knowing the other side as well as you know your own

By Scaachi Koul



Debating skills could help you become

Prime Minister of Canada, or just win that long-running argument with your brother about the making of the last *Star Trek* episode in 1969.

Either way, Willis Kachuk is there to help. As the coordinator of the non-profit Alberta Debate and Speech Association, Kachuk promotes and organizes debates in both official languages throughout the province. **Grip** interrogated Kachuk on the art of crushing rhetoric.

Grip: What is the history of debating, and what skills do you need?

Willis Kachuk: From its very beginnings, debate has been inextricably intertwined with the concept of the open society. In ancient Athens, citizens gathered in forums to debate the most pressing issues of the day before casting their votes. They were an integral part of the new form of government Athens was to bequeath to the world: Democracy. For democracy to flourish, the values that debate encourages – reason, tolerance, the careful weighing of evidence – must be cherished and nurtured. The skills required are the ability to speak before a group, quick thinking, knowledge, research ability and the ability to defend your position while refuting what the opposition has said.

Grip: What kind of careers could you go into after honing debating skills?

WK: All careers eventually involve some debating skills. One of the most obvious is the political arena, where you have to defend the policies you want to implement. However, a sales career

offers a good platform, trying to convince customers to buy a product. Of course, Lawyers and teachers also use debating skills every day. Even a child at home can use debate to convince his parents that they should do something he or she wants.

Grip: What loses a debate for someone and how do people get over the fear of public speaking?

WK: Most debates are lost because of lack of preparation. If a student does not have a good background knowledge of events, they will be unable to refute the arguments presented. Also, a debater needs to be able to present arguments in a clear, logical sequence. Managing the fear begins with believing that you're going to do just fine. You have to constantly remind yourself that you're the right person to make this presentation. This may mean giving yourself pep talks during preparation, between leaving home in the morning and arriving at the podium. This is why clubs like ADSA and Toastmasters exist – to give people a podium.

Grip: What is the most difficult aspect of a competitive debate?

WK: The rebuttal. Most of the speeches during the debate have been prepared in advance. The rebuttal must be presented without much preparation. The student has to listen very carefully

to everything the opposition says and offer a counter argument on the spur of the moment. This requires quick thinking and good organizational skills.

Grip: Do you ever have to debate or defend something that you completely disagree with on a personal level?

WK: In competitive debating, both sides are required to debate the affirmative and negative of a resolution. As a result, the debater must become familiar with reasons behind both sides of an issue. It is the mark of a good debater to be able to put aside emotions and present arguments logically.

Grip: What is the difference between a debate and an argument?

WK: In order to make a decision about who wins or loses, debates have predetermined rules all competitors have to follow. In an argument, there are no rules. In fact, the winner of an all-out argument is often the one who does not play by the rules.

Grip: If you're young and interested in debating, where should you go?

WK: Find a school with a competitive debate program and get involved. Or create one and become a member of ADSA. **Q**

Quiz: What Kind of Fighter Are You?

By Levi Michaud

Are you a scaredy-pants when it comes to confrontation? Maybe you get a bit mean in a conflict situation. How do you really come across when the gloves are off? Take this quiz to find out.

1. Your friend borrows an item from you but doesn't treat it with care and breaks it. Do you:

- a) Ask what happened and suggest that he replace it
- b) Completely freak out and scream blue murder
- c) Say "it's ok, no big deal" and drop the subject forever

2. You catch a fellow student cheating off your exam. Do you:

- a) Ask her not to do it again and talk to the teacher about a re-take
- b) Blackmail her for the rest of the school year
- c) Just let her do it

3. Your best friend steals your crush. Do you:

- a) Talk to him about how you are feeling
- b) Steal his little sister
- c) Say "that's ok, there are other fish in the sea"

4. You find out that one of your friends is spreading rumours about you. Do you:

- a) Confront her to get her side of the story
- b) Spread rumours about her that are twice as vicious
- c) Just ignore it and hope that it stops



Note: This quiz is for entertainment purposes only. It's not a diagnostic tool, you scaredy-pants.

5. You work with a partner on a home-work assignment and your partner takes all the credit for your ideas. Do you:

- a) Tell her how you feel and come to a compromise
- b) Have a yelling match with her during your presentation
- c) Let her take the credit, but never work with her again

6. Everyone picks on this one kid at school; you find out a group of people are planning to play a particularly cruel prank on this individual. Do you:

- a) Stand up for the kid by using words as your weapons
- b) Bring your gang to beat the others up
- c) Go along with the group and don't say a word

7. You find out your best friend is fooling around with your girlfriend. Do you:

- a) Confront them both and break up with the girlfriend
- b) Freak out at the best friend and destroy your girlfriend's CD collection
- c) Pretend nothing happened; hear no evil, see no evil

8. You catch somebody at school stealing from you. Do you:

- a) Ask him to stop and report him to the school office
- b) Speak in tongues, leaving him with an indelible memory of your enraged face
- c) Let him take the item. It's only stuff

9. Your parents accuse you of being lazy around the house. Do you:

- a) Consider it, and offer a compromise where you do a little bit more
- b) Lash out at them, run to your room and slam the door
- c) Promise to do everything they say until you leave home at 21

10. Someone describing you would say:

- a) You are a very reasonable person who likes to hear both sides of the story
- b) You are a little scary and need to be medicated
- c) You're quiet and rarely interfere or interject

MOSTLY A's – STEADY SAM

You're assertive but fair. You listen to both sides of the situation before passing judgment. You're a reasonable person who tries to right unfair situations with honour. You're not afraid to stand up for your beliefs. Respect for others is also important to you.

MOSTLY B's – VENGEFUL VICTORIA

You're aggressive and vengeful. You're an opinionated person and not afraid to show how you feel. Expressing anger is a virtue for you, and you'll do anything to win. If that means losing it completely, so be it. You'll do anything to come out on top, even if you have to have a temper tantrum.

MOSTLY C's – SCAREDY-PANTS STEVE

You can't stop what's happening, so why try? You go with the flow and keep your feelings to yourself. You don't like to make others angry and find that the fight is rarely worth it, anyway.

Twin Truths

Whether you're fraternal or identical, fighting with your twin can be doubly hard

By Stephanie Smith

Click! The television station changes suddenly from *That 70's Show* to *Family Guy*.

"Hey! I was watching that," I say.

"So? I want to watch something else," says my twin brother, Brandon.

"I don't! Turn it back!"

"No!"

Whack! A pillow flies across the living room and barely misses my head. It slaps against the back of the couch and lands on the cushion. This is a normal day for me, and when it comes to communicating with my twin, sometimes this is as good as it gets.

Most people know that there are identical and fraternal twins, they just don't know the difference. An identical twin is one fertilized egg that splits in two in the womb. They have the same appearance, DNA, and are the same gender. A fraternal twin is when two different eggs are fertilized at the same time and share the womb. They can be the same or opposite sex, and can be nothing alike. That's what I am; a fraternal twin. When I tell people, I usually have to clear up the different kinds before I can continue.

Brandon and I can get along, and we sometimes communicate really well, but it's a 50/50 deal. Half the time we can watch television or movies with the family, or have fairly civilized conversations at the dinner table. The other half, we're angrily biting each other's heads off, jumping to conclusions, and sometimes on the verge of violence. Ours is a love-hate relationship. When we were kids, we were pretty much the same. We went from friends to enemies in 10 seconds flat. We fought about toys, television, and who loved Mom and Dad more.

Now we fight about space issues, like going into each other's rooms, touching each other's

belongings, fighting with our parents, and invading each other's personal lives.

One thing that really bugs me is when I feel like my brother is putting up a barrier. He won't talk to me, and he won't take down the wall between us. Some twins say that they actually have a connection that they can feel (one gets hurt, the other one cries). I guess we have a little bit of a deeper connection than most siblings. Sometimes we don't have to say anything to understand how the other is feeling. We just know. But we are just as capable of accusations, insults and verbal diarrhea. These things are also a part of our daily lives. Being a twin is like getting a flu shot. You don't want it, it kind of hurts, but in the end, it's all for the better. Brandon has his own unique analogy. He says it's like being in a mosh pit at a good concert. It can be fun and rough, and has its highs, like crowd surfing, and its lows, like getting stepped on and bruised. "But overall, it's a good experience that I would do again," he says.

Most twins generally have a better understanding of each other and communicate better with each other than with their other family members or friends. Maybe this is because they spent so much time together when they were small. Twins learn many things about one another – their facial expressions, emotions, gestures – some twins even make up their own unique language. In fact, some twins can finish each other's sentences, communicate without words and even say they share pain!

All in all, communication is a special part of twins' lives. So there is a bond there, underneath it all. We have a mutual understanding that can't be broken or explained. No matter whether we're fighting, laughing, or hanging out, I know that being a twin is very special. ☐





Twinspeak

People often ask twins if they had their own **special language** when they were little kids. Twin language, called idio-glossia, seems to fascinate people and there have been lots of studies about it.

But it's not a magical, secret language. Babies learn to talk by imitating adults and other kids. Many little kids have older siblings to imitate, but twins imitate each other. So basically, they are copying each other's **baby talk** and immature pronunciation and grammar of English, not inventing a new language.

Some twins take a little longer to learn how to talk, maybe because they were often born early and don't have as much **one-on-one** taking time with their parents. But anyone who's listened to twins arguing knows that they catch up.

Terrific Twos

Here are some cool facts about twins:

- **Identical twins** are the result of an egg that splits in half during fertilization. They share 100 per cent of their DNA. They are the same gender and tend to look very similar.
- **Fraternal twins** are the result of two eggs being fertilized at the same time. They share 50 per cent or more of their DNA. They can be the same or opposite sex, they can look similar or very different.
- **Conjoined twins** occur when, during the formation of identical twins, the egg does not split all the way. One in 200,000 births is conjoined.
- **Mirror image** twins are identical twins who show mirroring traits instead of identical traits. For example, one is left-handed, the other is right-handed.
- The scientific study of twins is called **gemellology**.
- Eighteen to 22 per cent of twins are left handed. For non-twins the **rate of lefties** is only 10 per cent.
- **Since 1980**, twin births have risen 64 per cent.
- Fraternal twinning occurs in **one out of 60 births**. Identical twinning occurs one in 150 births.
- On average, twins are born 22 days premature.
- Multiple births are the **most common** in African American women.
- Multiple births are **least common** in Asian cultures.
- "Twin" comes from the German word "twine", meaning **"two together."**

Facts about Multiples

www3.telus.net/tyee/multiples

Harvard Twins Study

<http://twins.wjh.harvard.edu>

Through a glass, darkly

After seven years of depression and self-mutilation, a Calgary teen sees a light at the end of the tunnel

By Allison McPhail

I think I have been clinically depressed for the past seven years. My parents did not know how I was feeling until four years ago. I haven't been able to fight my way out yet, but I don't have to fight it alone anymore. I finally have a hope that I might exorcise my demons and emerge all the stronger for it.

Looking back, I can pinpoint when my depression began. I have always been bullied, but it wasn't until my family moved to Oklahoma that my mood began to dive downward. I couldn't handle the change and significant tensions had developed in our household. I became depressed and very angry, sometimes even violent. I felt unloved and grew introverted, which made me feel even lonelier.

Feelings like this are quite common. Most teenagers with serious depression have troubled relationships with family or friends. In fact, registered psychologist Tammy Dalrymple-White of the Alberta Children's Hospital in Calgary says that she rarely meets depressed youths who are not struggling with the significant relationships in their lives. It's hard to say if the troubled relationship or the depression comes first. Depression has also been found to have a connection to your genetic background. The trigger isn't really important because the situation becomes what Dalrymple-White calls a catch-

22, where each element serves to fuel the others. According to Dalrymple-White, this is why it is so important that those facing depression make an effort to live normally. "Being depressed," she says, "may cause people to do more things that make them feel depressed."

Clinical depression is marked by a combination of mental and physical symptoms that can vary widely. Where one person may suffer from insomnia and be quite agitated, another person may be constantly fatigued and visibly lacking in energy. Other aspects of depression are universal, such as decreased interest or pleasure in activities and an overall sad mood most of the day, every day. Another common aspect of depression is a tendency to isolate oneself from others; this is where family and friends can help.

In my case, a combination of factors pulled me down. I was always a loner. Because of this, the few friends I did make were very important to me. Being forced to leave them when my Dad found employment in the U.S. devastated me, and I never got the help I needed to recover. I began to spend large portions of time locked in my bedroom with fantasy novels set in worlds I fervently wished I could fly off to and live in. At night I would cry into my stuffed animals or cling desperately to my two cats. During the day I vented my frustrations in violent outbursts;

during one of my worst arguments with my father, I even kicked a hole in the wall.

When we moved back to Calgary I imagined life would magically be set right. But by then my father and I weren't speaking to each other. When I started school that fall, I understood why so many people remember junior high unfavourably. Suddenly the bullying was absolutely vicious. I was a complete outcast, and nearly all of my classmates either worked actively to make my life miserable or stood silently by. By the end of that school year I struggled daily with thoughts of suicide and turned to cutting in order to cope. I felt I'd discovered an amazing new method for dealing with my emotions. It gave me a temporary sense of calm and peace and provided an alternative outlet for my bottled-up emotions to violent outbursts. After nearly a year of intermittently cutting and re-opening the same wounds to avoid drawing attention to my scars, my father commented on my 'scratches.' After that I hid them.

Then one day my parents called a family meeting to announce they were getting a divorce. At first I didn't mind. Then suddenly family life exploded; my younger sister wasn't speaking to my mother and my parents were speaking through their lawyers. My mood spi-




alled downwards. Soon after starting Grade 12 I was so depressed I was scared. Cutting was the only thing I felt I had left to turn to. My family issues increased as well. The one good thing to come of the divorce was an improvement in my relationship with my Dad. Now the sole caregiver for my sister and myself, he has been forced to become more aware of our needs. We talk more and have come to understand one another better. He understands that I am fighting a serious illness and does his best to provide support, although he still doesn't clue in very well to my mood unless I tell him.

As far as Dalrymple-White is concerned, the most helpful thing you can do for a depressed loved one is talk. It may require a good deal of persistence to get them to open up, but their actions can often be misinterpreted so discussion is the only way to discover what they really need. Seek professional help; depression can be quite stressful and few people have the knowledge and skills to cope with it properly. Another reason to seek professional help is the connection between depression and suicide. According to the World Health Organization, 90 per cent of suicides are associated with mental disorders. From the year 2000 to 2003 there were

20 suicides per 100,000 people in Alberta, not counting attempts.

My friend Axie tried to kill herself several times; she spent six months in a hospital to prevent her from making another attempt. She is still coping with the death of her mother, the trigger for her depression in the first place, and her difficult relationship with her father. She is slowly recovering through therapy, antidepressants and karate classes. "Punching shit and just letting all my anger out does wonders for me," she says. According to Dalrymple-White, exercise is helpful because it releases endorphins, hormones that make you feel happy and alive, but also because depressed people tend to lack motivation and benefit from the satisfaction of having done something active.

An outlet for expression is a valuable tool for dealing with negative emotions when they pile up too high. My preference is writing poetry and singing along to my favourite songs. Talking with a friend can provide immense relief. I have high hopes for a time when these activities are merely pleasurable hobbies instead of essential coping tools. Until then, I am doing what I can to find happiness. My hope is to one day fly in space as an astronaut for NASA, and I am determined to overcome all obstacles, including my depression, that stand in my way. 

Places to Turn

- **Mental Health Help Line:**
1-877-303-2642
- **Calgary Distress Centre Teen Line:**
403-264-8336
- **Edmonton Salvation Army Teen Helping Teens Support Line:**
780-428-8336
(Alberta Toll Free: 1-877-803-8336)
- **Visit the centre for suicide prevention:** www.suicideinfo.ca
- **Youth One:** www.youthone.com
- **Healthlink Alberta:**
www.healthlinkalberta.ca

Suicide Helpcard

If someone you know:

- threatens suicide
- talks about wanting to die
- shows changes in behaviour, appearance, mood
- abuses drugs, alcohol
- deliberately injures themselves
- appears depressed, sad, withdrawn...

You can help:

- stay calm and listen
- **let them talk** about their feelings
- be accepting; do not judge
- ask if they have suicidal thoughts
- **take threats seriously**
- don't swear secrecy - tell someone

Get help: **You can't do it alone.**

Contact: Family, friends, relatives, clergy, teachers, counsellors, doctors, crisis lines, mental health services or hospital emergency departments

Source: Suicide Information and Education Centre



The Bedroom Wars

"Your room is disgusting," says Grayson's mom. He thinks otherwise. A he said/she said story



By Cait Wills and Grayson Evans

He says: Get off my back, it's my space!

The first thing that you should know is that I am a very messy person, which explains our problem. Mom and I have different opinions about my room, but I think that it shouldn't matter to her because *it's my room*. Well, I don't actually know what my mom's opinion is. If you think about it, our parents are just trying to help us and I appreciate that but sometimes I just think that she is pushing me too much. If she asks I will do it, but I will do it when I am good and ready. That's when the problem arises.

My mom gets mad because I don't clean my room the moment she asks me to. So I either get grounded or get something taken away, like my PSP, for example. I can tell you what I think: I don't care how messy my room is. I only use it to change my clothes and sleep. But that's beside the point. I always make sure I know where I put my stuff so my room being messy and my mom thinking that I am going to lose stuff is not even an issue. The only reason for our major arguments is when I don't clean my room when she asks, and when she sees I left my homework at home (which is just me being forgetful, and I am pretty sure you have done that before). By now you must think my mom is pretty mean, but she is not; she works long and hard every day and has barely any time to relax and my being lazy doesn't really help.

The worst thing about trying to keep my room clean is that I have too many things and too many clothes. I am running out of places to put them and it is frustrating, because then I have to cram things into my desk and into my closet, which then makes my mom even madder.

When she sees that, she freaks out and that's when I just hate life and have to spend an hour organizing my room. It makes my mom happy, unless I don't do it right; then I have to do it over again. Clean up my clothes, organize my desk and vacuum. But after I clean up, it only takes me about a day to make it messy again, which makes my mom even madder, so this starts up our little feud all over again. We have two different opinions but it always ends the same way. An argument I can't win.

She says: Clean your room or I'm going to lose my mind!

One day when I was 14 my mom freaked out. While my brothers and I were at school, she took all our stuff – snowboards, boots, coats and junk – and threw it all out on our front yard. The thing that pissed me off the most was that when we asked her why she had done it, she said (yelled) that she was sick and tired of us ignoring her when she asked us to clean up our stuff. The worst thing about it was that she threw my combat boots in the garbage. She said they were gross, ugly and falling apart. But they were mine; she didn't



care that she took one of my favorite and most treasured possessions and threw them away. I swore then that if I ever had kids I would never, ever, do that to them.

Fast-forward almost 20 years and I have to admit, sometimes I'm tempted to do the exact same thing to my son that my mom did to me. My son Grayson's room is, in my opinion, gross. It's dark and dismal. (It's in the basement, as far away from the rest of family as possible.) There's dust everywhere and clothes cover every surface.

I can't stand it. And while I know, intellectually at least, that I'm not welcome in there so it shouldn't matter, the thought of it makes me cringe.

The worst thing about it is that my son doesn't seem to care. He doesn't have a problem stepping over socks left on the ground that



STOCK PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGE

are at least a week past their wear-by date; he has no problem leaving his empty glass of milk for the cat to knock off his desk in her attempt to lick it clean; he doesn't seem to mind having to scramble at the last minute before leaving for school to find his gym stuff, which is buried under a foot-and-a-half of laundry that hasn't been put away. I love my son more than anything and his insistence that he live in what I consider unliveable conditions has no bearing on that. It makes me wonder about his sanity sometimes, but never makes me love him less. I just wish that he would recognize that when I ask him to clean his room and he doesn't, it makes me feel like he's assessing the fact that I've asked him to do something and deciding "whatever."

Whether he likes it or not at this point in his life, this is my home. I work hard to pay for

it, the food he eats and the clothes he wears. As much as he may hate it, that makes me the boss. Being the boss means being fair, but it also means that your rules are rules; when they're not followed, there are consequences.

I've tried a few different things to make sure my rule about a clean bedroom is followed. I've upped his allowance by 50 per cent, provided he keep his room clean without me having to ask. (A double reward: the extra cash and he wouldn't have to listen to me bitch.) That lasted about two weeks.

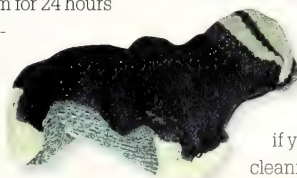
I threatened to ground him for 24 hours every time I had to say something about his room. And then I got tired of yelling. My throat started to hurt, and he spent a lot of time grounded. As a last resort,

I figured I'd start taking away what precious little money he had left from his weekly allowance: every time I had to remind him to clean his room, he'd lose \$5. As soon as he got to zero balance, he stopped doing the chores his allowance was payment for.

So this is my new plan: Ignore it.

When Grayson doesn't have a clean school uniform to wear because he neglected to pick it up off the floor and put it in the laundry, his teachers will give him detention; and he's a lot more scared of them than me, so maybe

that'll sink in. When there are no glasses left because they're all in his room, he'll have to drink out of a bowl. I'll let you know if it works. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have some cleaning to do. ☐



Spotting Depression

According to the Canadian Network for Mood and Anxiety Treatment, "if you check off at least five of the items on the following list, and symptoms have been present most days, all day, for at least two weeks, you should seek help." Speak to your doctor, your parents or a teacher or guidance counsellor.

- Depressed mood; often including **irritability** in teens
- **Loss of interest** in favourite activities
- Significant **weight loss or gain**
- Insomnia or sleeping too much; some people **wake too early** in the morning
- Feelings of either apathy or **agitation**
- No energy
- Feelings of worthlessness and/or **guilt**
- **Inability to concentrate** or make decisions
- **Recurrent thoughts** of death or suicide

Source: Canadian Network for Mood and Anxiety Treatments www.canmat.org

See page 27 for some resources

Nobody Understands

You Can't Snap Out Of It

If everybody understood depression, nobody would tell you it was just emo

By Simon Ritchie

Being depressed is like being sick. Unless

you have the same virus, you don't understand how it feels. Depression can be devastating because it has the potential to become a serious catastrophe. After surviving my own battle with it, I feel I finally understand its reality, and some of its causes. I once had a friend I'll call "Dave" who lost a friend in a sporting accident and decided to take his own life. He'd told me in a joking manner that if he was ever going to kill himself, he'd do it "neatly" because he wanted to have an open casket at his funeral. He said he wanted his mother to be able to look at him one last time. I didn't take it seriously. One day he died by suicide. It was not the right thing to do, but I understand that he could not handle living anymore.

When I lost my best friend Adrian to a drunk driver, I understood the difference between me and Dave. The part that brought me down the most was that I felt it was my fault Adrian died. If I hadn't asked him to come see me he wouldn't have been crossing the street where the impaired driver struck him. People reacted differently to my depression. Some tried to comfort me, others assumed I was just in a bad mood. A few just thought it was a phase, or emo.

Based on my experience, I know that the best way of dealing with depression is to find something you are good at to focus on it. Acting, drawing, writing, dancing, exercising, cooking ... you name it. It is also important to talk about what you are going through: a friend, a parent, a teacher, a counsellor, ANYONE! Whatever you do, don't let it build up inside you. I chose to focus on writing, to channel all my feelings and thoughts through my pen; anything to help release the built up feelings. I had to get it out

before it consumed me.

Crying was also an important aspect of my recovery. I don't think most people can truly accept something as serious as losing a loved one without tears. My depression also got serious a few times. I attempted suicide more than once. I felt like I had no other options, like it wasn't worth fighting anymore. What made the difference for me was my writing. I wish Dave could have found something to help him too.

Depression succeeds by building itself up so high, until it begins to destroy everything within and around you. One day it is too high for you to reach the top and it takes everything you love with it. Dave thought he was stopping his pain when he killed himself, not realizing that he was destroying his family and hurting many around him.

I've seen people look at depression sufferers as outcasts when they should be embraced. They don't understand that everyone is unique. We all have different breaking points, mental capacities and physical make-up that determine how much we can endure. When I lost my best friend I was a wreck. I stopped eating, talking and sleeping. I was afraid to talk because I couldn't bear to say his name. I couldn't sleep because I was afraid of having nightmares about his death. I was moody all the time, felt like crap almost all day, every day. But I survived. I think of it kind of like butterflies' wings. If you've ever tried to catch one and rubbed or touched their wings, you might have noticed a powdery substance left on your fingers. It used to be thought that if this powder came off the butterfly, it could no longer fly. Some people are like that - damaged by just a touch that might not hurt you or me. They need help, not judgment. ■



Help Wanted

You have questions that you're afraid to ask. Fear not. You've come to the right place. In consultation with our experts, **Help Wanted** can answer your most ordinary or most embarrassing questions.

Got a problem with a friend? Can't stop stealing? Cutting? Is your boyfriend belittling you? Is there a gross sex question you'd curl up and die if your friends found out you were asking?

If there's no way you'd ever ask your parents or friends *that* question, just send it our way. We never point and laugh.

Question: My best friend has kind of gotten in with a bad crowd. He's starting to ignore me when I see him around his group of friends. I'm worried about him getting into alcohol, drugs and sex. I want to tell him something that might help him stay on the right track, but I don't know what to say. Do you have any suggestions for me?

— *Concerned in Canmore*

Dear Concerned,
Sounds like you are in a difficult position. It's not easy to influence someone you care about when they are starting to ignore you. You could try telling him how you feel and your concerns for him. One way to do this is to speak to him when his new friends aren't

around. Try inviting him over to your place or finding a neutral place to meet him. What are some of the things you used to do together? Invite him to one of these activities. When you tell him your concerns, assure your friend that you are available to talk and that you are concerned about his new behaviour.

However, your friend might not be interested in hearing what you have to say, so you should be ready for rejection. If this is the case, then you shouldn't take it personally. Your friend is making decisions with his life, just as you are with yours. But try to be patient and hope that he figures it out for himself. Sometimes people just have to find out the hard way which is the right path for them. He might come around.

Question: I'm a 14-year-old girl and recently I've been sweating a lot. I use antiperspirant and it helps a little but not totally. It's so embarrassing to have those rings around my armpits. I keep my sweater on all the time, but that just makes it worse. I heard there's a product that dries your armpits right out. Is it safe?

— *Sylvan Lake Sweater*

Dear Sylvan,
Drysol is a strong over-the-counter topical aluminum chloride antiperspirant, but may cause skin irritation. It has more of the active ingredient than most regular antiperspirants.

It's important to remember that sweating is a natural process and serves to cool the body. Your sweat might not be that excessive; you may simply be unaccustomed to it because at your age armpit sweat is relatively new. Everybody sweats.

If you are convinced that your sweating is truly excessive, it's important to check with a dermatologist or family physician to rule out underlying causes of heavy sweating such as thyroid problems. Other treatment options

include Botox, pills, iontophoresis and surgery. Any potential treatments should be addressed with your doctor to determine which, if any, best suit you.

Question: I'm 16 and I've recently become a vegetarian. My mom says I'm not getting enough nutrients. Is she right?

— *Veging in Vegreville*

Dear Veg,
That depends on whether or not you have replaced the meat in your diet adequately. If you have done your research and are conscious about your food choices, then a vegetarian diet is a very healthful one. To get basic information, check out Canada's Food Guide (www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index_e.html). Basically, you'll need to ensure that you get adequate protein from nuts and seeds, soy, beans and lentils in combination with grains. You are still growing, so you also need adequate calcium. Consider continuing to drink milk and eat cheese for calcium and certain vitamins and minerals. Head for the dark, leafy veggies and whole grains as well as molasses and some nuts for iron. Fortified veggie "meats" are also a good source of some of your dietary requirements. Talk to your doctor about your new diet. Most doctors agree that it won't hurt you to take a multivitamin with iron.

Help Wanted is provided for general informational purposes only and is not intended to replace consultations with your doctor or to provide medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any personal medical and health questions that you may have.

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10259-105 St.
Edmonton, AB T5J 1E3





Make Us Believe

Tupelo Honey is living the indie rock dream, complete with a national battle-of-the-bands title, a new CD and a stinky tour van

By Lisa Ostrowski

Tupelo Honey, an Edmonton-based alternative rock band, is proving that you can do a lot in four years.

Since vocalist Matt Landry, bassist Steve Vincent, drummer Greg Williamson and guitarists Dan Davidson and Tyler Dianocky formed the group in 2003, they have established themselves as a major contender both on the local scene and nation-wide.

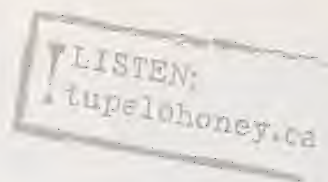
Critics hail them as one of Edmonton's most promising alternative bands in recent years. Their newest record, *The September Sessions*, is set to be released within the next month. It's first single, "Make Me Believe," has already been getting plenty of airtime on radio stations like Edmonton's Sonic 102.9 and Calgary's X 92.9. Tupelo Honey was even selected to be Sonic's band of the month for March, causing demand for their new release to skyrocket.

Grip recently caught up with guitarist Dan

Davidson during a jam session with some other band members for some quick questions on success, recording and the trials and tribulations of band life.

"I'm like Cinderella!" jokes Davidson when asked about Tupelo Honey's rapid rise to fame. "This is like a fairy tale, and I'm Cinderella... trust me. It's awesome."

He explains that band life has its ups and downs, but Tupelo Honey has done fairly well for themselves. They came together by accident as a back-up band, and were joking around about starting a rock band one night while hanging out in drummer Greg Williamson's basement. Their debut CD was released in 2005, with the singles from it gaining international attention. That same year, they won a nationwide battle of the bands, the "Xtreme Band Slam" contest, giving them a grand prize of \$50,000 in gear and services towards recording new material.



They've since opened for bands such as Metric, The Trews, and Theory of a Deadman at shows across western Canada.

But the road to now has not been without the occasional rut. Currently, the band is searching for distribution for their new disc. "It's out, but it's not out yet," Davidson explains.

"We're looking for distribution right now. It's looking good, and we're going to be selling it online. It's just a matter of getting it into stores now."

The five-song EP (an abbreviation for "extended play," the name given to CDs that contain more than a single but aren't long enough to be an album) was recorded in Toronto with Producer Jeff Dalziel from Sony. (It's currently available on the band's myspace page at www.myspace.com/tupelohoney.)

After flying to Toronto and working on several songs there, the band eventually chose to record two songs that were written in Edmonton and three from their Toronto sessions. Davidson explains that while they were in Toronto, they lived the true indie rock dream – poor and uncomfortable.

"We had a crappy hotel room [some nights] and slept on the floor of the studio some nights," Davidson says. "It was awesome. I wouldn't have had it any other way."

After the distribution issues are sorted out, Davidson says the band intends to tour to promote the new CD. As the first single, "Make Me Believe," has received so much attention, he knows that the coming months will probably be devoted to playing shows to support the disc's popularity. They've had offers for springtime shows, and they're looking at doing some shows across Canada over the summer.

Not that touring is everything it's cracked up to be. "When we play a show, people are always

"I'm like Cinderella!"
jokes Davidson when asked
about Tupelo Honey's rapid rise to fame.
**"This is like a fairy tale,
and I'm Cinderella."**

like, 'Oh, you guys are rich, you have a big tour bus' and we're like, 'No, we live in a stinky van,'" he laughs.

Sometimes, he says, instead of it feeling like a completely fantastic and unreal experience, life feels "a little too real." Despite the band's success, and winning the Xtreme band slam, there are still tough times. But, he explains, they're not a band just for the sake of having money or being famous.

"I've been playing in bands since I was 13 or something. It was just kind of something that I always really liked doing. Having band practice and doing shows and stuff like that on the weekend during high school," Davidson says. In Grade 12, he found himself casting around for something to do the following year. "At the last minute, I applied to McEwan." Davidson entered Grant MacEwan College's music program the following fall.

"I think it's kind of the same for the other guys. It's something that we never really had to think about. I just always wanted to do music, and I'm still doing it." If it weren't for Tupelo Honey, he says he'd still be doing music no matter what.

Still, Davidson acknowledges the fact that fame is not something Tupelo Honey is against. When presented with the idea of his band

becoming international superstars (as has been predicted by some,) he comments, "We hope that that comes true. We've been working, and we're not trying to get ahead of ourselves or anything."

"We've had a lot of success, especially with our new songs, so we're gonna keep that coming and see where we can go." Somehow, in all his descriptions of the band and band life, no matter how awful it may be, Davidson

has a knack for making his job seem downright enviable. Touring with his four best friends, travelling around the country and playing music, Davidson sounds like he's got the ideal job. But he cautions anyone who wants to follow in his footsteps.

"If it's what you really love, then do it. But make sure you're prepared financially and make sure you pick the right guys. You want to be sure that everyone's gonna be there for the long haul and everybody can be in it without having commitments that are going to pull them away."

The band's recent successes haven't gone to their heads. Davidson admits that they have been very fortunate, but that their good fortune has been due to hard work.

"Sometimes we see some slow patches, but that's just because we work hard for a while and then the people like agents and managers and lawyers and stuff take [our work] and they do their part of it. So it's kind of a two-sided fight towards exposure, I guess."

So what's next for Tupelo Honey? Well, likely a tour, cross-Canada for now, and likely further afield in the future. But Alberta fans can rest assured; Edmonton will always be Tupelo Honey's hometown.

"Edmonton has always been our favourite for shows," Davidson says. "The crowd is awesome. We love it here." **E**



Sell Yourself

You can rattle off a **dozen** things that bug you or that you'd like to **change** or that you'd like other **people** to change their **minds** about. Now's the time to harness that **positive** energy and **learn** how to **communicate** effectively

By Lana Hall

It's in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, ladies and gentlemen: freedom of speech and freedom of expression. You have the right to be bold and be heard. But hold it! No matter how badly you want to speak out, it's never justifiable to delve into the realm of the temper tantrum. There are loads of ways to be the most effective, powerful, and spunky communicator that you can be.

If you want to win someone over to your view, you'll have to take a deep breath. No really, it's not just for new-age meditative groups. Having a nervous breakdown won't help your cause. So take that breath – and an emotional step backwards – so you can assess your situation. Tessa Lloyd, a registered clinical counsellor based in Victoria B.C., emphasizes the need to know who you're talking to. Whether it's a friend, your parents, or a local organization, she believes in "knowing your market audience and their interests, needs, and goals." For youth who want fervently to be heard (we know you're out there), Lloyd advises people to rehearse statements and



approach their subject by "being really clear, really cool and really calm."

Part of that is knowing exactly what you want to say. So write it down on post-it notes and stick them to your mirror or your closet door for inspiration. Practise your argument on your dog or hey, on someone who can give you feedback. Know your platform like the back of your hand and stick with it. As a parting piece of advice, make sure you have an end in mind. What is it you want out of this argument? A better grade? Someone's honest opinion? The keys to the car

on a Saturday night? Make sure you have a clear idea. "Be strategic," says Lloyd. "The end result is worth it."

In some cases, the end result may be a job. Interviews are no walk in the park. Your palms are sweaty, your shoes are killing you. Oh no, you can't remember if you brushed your teeth after eating that cheese and onion bagel! All this just for a burger-flipping interview? Relax. Take some pride in yourself. Stand up straight, make eye contact, don't fidget. Speak with conviction!

Deal With Common Characters



Brush-Off Bob: You know him; he nods at you like a puppet while busily filing papers. And no, you can't shoot spitballs at him to reclaim his attention. Try a direct approach: "Bob? I feel like you're not quite tuned in to me right now. And I need you to listen to what I'm saying."



Mrs. Purple-Face: In serious need of some vacation time, Mrs. Purple-face barely lets you get a word in. She starts raving incoherently, telling you to "grow up." (Oh, like you, Mrs. Purple-Face?) Practise conflict diffusion tactics or put your argument in writing. Don't sink to her level and engage in a screeching match.



Passive-Aggressive Pammy: Sickly sweet upfront, she pats you on the head, promising to consider your points. Unfortunately, she has no such intentions. If you suspect your views have been placed in the "out file," make sure you follow up. Be tenacious! Casually offer, "Thanks for having that talk with me last week. How are the developments going?"



Mr. Negative: This guy is pompous and blunt in his view that nothing you have to say is worth hearing. Strength in numbers! Get some friends together and practise a multi-person speech. Pass around a petition. You'll wear him down eventually.

Don't swear, interrupt, or badmouth your last boss. Again, remember to breathe. Before you go in, do some basic research on the company. And again, rehearse. Make a list of possible interview questions you might hear (Why do you want to work for us? What would make you a superstar burger flipper?) and get a friend to quiz you. When you meet with your potential employer, use open body language. Look him or her in the eye, don't cross your arms, and offer a firm handshake. Visualize success. Imagine yourself being enthusiastic and poised, accepting the inevitable offer graciously. Imagine yourself as a radiating ball of positivity. Prior experience isn't everything to an employer, especially at an entry-level job. You'd be surprised how far a confident, enthusiastic attitude can take you.

That same gung-ho attitude can serve you well outside the interview room. Say your local

recreation centre brushed you off when you tried to speak with them about reinstating their drop-in basketball sessions. Such injustice! Is this the part where you get naked and protest outside their door brandishing signs that read, "We'd rather play ball than bare butts?" Um, no. This is a great opportunity to make use of community-oriented methods of communication. Consider spreading your word via radio. Get out your notebook and compose a short, snappy message promoting your platform. Then contact your local radio station (most college or university campuses will have a student radio station, which is also an option) and politely ask them if they'd consider giving you some airtime for a "rant." If the thought makes you break out in

hives, send a message to the news desk outlining the problem and make yourself available for interview if a reporter would like to follow up.

Alternately, think about your local newspaper. Do you support the latest educational developments? Think teens are portrayed unfairly in the news? Consider sending a letter to the editor stating your view. Your paper will have an e-mail or address for such letters. Begin your note with "Dear Editor" and get writing. But state your views respectfully. That doesn't mean losing your fire, it just means communicating effectively in a way that is mature and passionate, not bratty.

All effective communicators have to face conflict at some point. How you handle that

conflict is the mark of your success in selling your ideas. In the middle of communication over a touchy subject, eventually someone is going to start huffing and puffing. Nostrils will start flaring, cheeks will turn a more vivid shade of pink, and voices raise in octaves until your "conversation" starts sounding like a pack of agitated, starving Chihuahuas.

You'll never win people over by making them howling mad. But you can earn their grudging respect by handling conflict graciously. If things start to get charged, take a deep breath (there it is again!) and keep your tone as neutral as possible. Despite how flustered others may get, your job is to take care of yourself. That means balancing the scales by remaining calm, patient

Things Not To Try

- **Anything involving eggs**, rotten vegetables or toilet paper
- Anything while under the influence of substances or **strong emotions**
- Things you might regret if they were brought up at a pivotal moment later in life (like running for office or getting married. **Can't you just see it?** "Here's to the bride, who once dressed in a bikini, spray painted the mayor's office as a statement against...")
- Anything involving **stink bombs** or dead animals

A person with light-colored hair is smiling and holding a white rectangular sign with both hands. The sign has the text "Have a strategy" written on it in a large, bold, purple, slightly distressed font. The person is wearing a dark-colored shirt with a red collar visible. The background is a plain, light color.


Have a
strategy

Advice to give
or take?:
graponlife.ca

and coherent. If needed, tell your flustered adversary (or yourself) that you'd like to continue this discussion when emotions aren't running so high. If that means reconvening the next day, then so be it. When addressing this problem, make sure to use "I" statements, which don't come off as accusatory. Example: "I really feel that we should continue this when we're both a little more calm. Right now, we aren't getting anywhere. What do you think?" Instead of, "I can't believe you're getting so mad, there's no way we're talking about this when you're acting crazy."

But there are situations when words fail you, or when other ways of communicating are more effective. (No, no, not the middle finger.) Remember that verbalization isn't the only way to be heard. When an outreach centre in Victoria, called Our Place, was struggling with the negative attitudes of its neighbours, staff took the liberty of putting up a photographic display in the window. It profiled several young street people who were regulars at the centre in a very humanistic way. "Likes: jazz, poetry, merlot. Dislikes: being hit by her ex-boyfriend" was scrawled under one hauntingly beautiful portrait. Victoria registered Art Therapist Linda Lange emphasizes the power of artistic communication. She concedes that in some situations, young people just "don't have the words." However, "bring out the art tools and the kid who had no way of telling you what was wrong is suddenly very articulate." This goes for more than just personal expression.

In your life, try getting some artsy friends together to create a photographic essay for a cause you're passionate about. Get some cotton T-shirts printed with a quote or statement you believe in. Or ask your librarian about local youth publications and see if they'd be willing to accept a short article from you. Open your mind to trying something new and bold.

The bottom line is that communication is an ever-evolving lesson. It's also a chameleon, taking many forms and contexts. As youth, we have a great advantage. We're stubborn and passionate and have a fresh, contemporary view on things. If we take some time to polish those communication skills and broaden our techniques, we have the potential to be unstoppable as we make ourselves heard. 

Good Cause and Effect

Make yourself heard by starting a charity. This is probably the safest way to leave your mark, but it's not as simple as it sounds. Whether you are a group of friends collecting pop cans, or an individual selling your own hair for cancer victims, starting a charity is a daunting task. But it's not impossible. There are federal, provincial and local requirements for starting one, and there are multiple organizations to choose from. They all have their own different requirements. Go ahead and test your convictions but first, do your research to make the path a little smoother and the benefits, both to you and your cause, a little greater.

— Curtis Wendlandt

Resources

Charity Village

www.charityvillage.com/cv/guides/guide4.asp

wikiHow

www.wikihow.com/Start-a-Charity

Dr. Charity

www.drcharity.com/npstart.html



It *Is* Your Business

Forget about working for the man.
Some teenagers are keen to try their
hand at their own business

By Kendra Doetzel



In 1996, 15-year-old Perry Pugh was a skateboard and snowboard fanatic. (He still is.) Back then, in his hometown of Fort McMurray, there was no place to invest in his hobbies and no retail centre of expertise to tap. Looking around, he realized that he knew as much or more about his favourite sports – and the gear that goes along with them – than anyone else. So he decided to open up shop.

“When it comes down to it,” Pugh says, “If you see the opportunity you should follow your heart and do something you love.”

He makes teenage entrepreneurship sound easy. In fact, in today’s society, buying and selling products and services is a huge industry. And, along with the industry, the number of entrepreneurs is growing. More and more young people are trying their hand at entrepreneurship. Like Pugh, they are taking their passions and turning them into cash.

Stephanie Sarjas, learning services coordinator at The Business Link in Edmonton, agrees

that the fire to try something new sustains entrepreneurs through many long hours of hard work. “The neat ideas come from the passionate side. Passion is the driving force,” she says.

But it’s not enough. The biggest question of all is how do you turn passion into business?

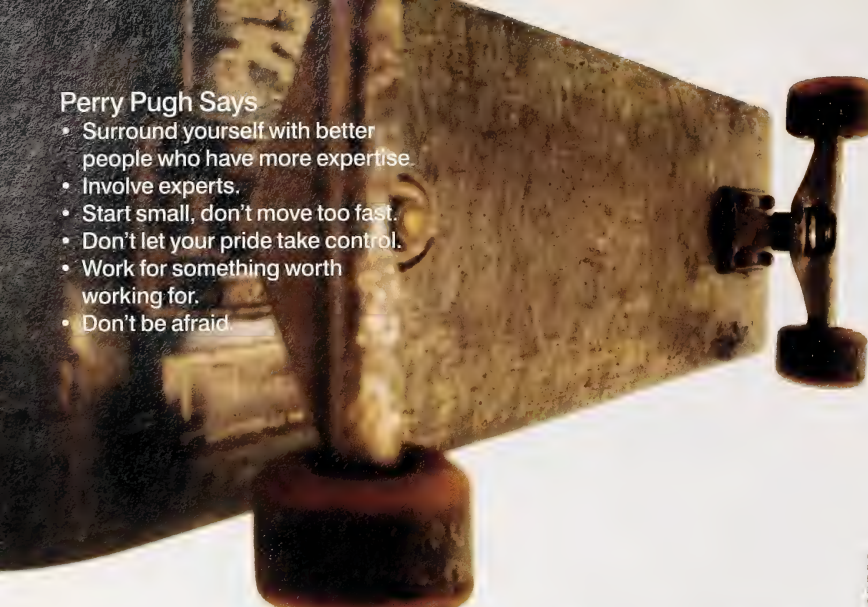
The first step to being an entrepreneur is knowing what products or services you want to sell. In Pugh’s case it was a no-brainer. Hooked on boarding, he could tap into his passion for a solid grounding in the equipment side. Other people may have a passion for building bird houses, grooming dogs or even designing clothing. Recognizing what you want to sell is a crucial step to becoming an entrepreneur and following your passion. “You’ll get more out of it if you’re personally involved,” Pugh says.

Next, you have to figure out how you will start to build financial stability for yourself and your business. “Many people don’t have a proper business plan in place. You have to sit down and actually plan things out,” Sarjas says. The

Business Link has a library of standard business plans and samples and offers training sessions to would-be entrepreneurs. It also serves as a referral point for other youth business programs.

Always remember that you’re going to have to pay for your supplies and maintain any costs you incur. Have a monetary backup plan, and save, save, save! Loans are a good option. There are lots of financial institutions willing to help young entrepreneurs onto their feet, such as the Canadian Youth Business Foundation. Places like the CYBF also offer mentor and support young entrepreneurs. There are Community Futures of Alberta offices across the province that provide resources for people looking into entrepreneurship. “I secured financing through the Business Development Centre in Fort McMurray,” Pugh says.

Once you’ve established the what and the how, you can start answering questions such as where should your business operate? “I wrote a business plan and a local businessman offered



Perry Pugh Says

- Surround yourself with better people who have more expertise.
- Involve experts.
- Start small, don't move too fast.
- Don't let your pride take control.
- Work for something worth working for.
- Don't be afraid

to let me rent a corner of his sporting goods store," Pugh says. "It was a summer thing and I set up my own place the following year."

If you are creating a product, where would be the best place to establish your business or sell your product? For example, if you were creating bird houses, maybe you should target gift shops in operation near a wildlife park. Make sure your business is near an area that will be useful to it, such as Pugh's corner of an existing sporting goods shop.

Consider where you are going to set up shop. Your mom might be OK if you work in the basement for a while, but eventually you'll need to find a new place. Look around for small spaces that you can rent for a few months at a time, in case something happens or you decide to move somewhere new. You will need an adult, such as a parent or guardian, to co-sign all loan applications, rental agreements and other legal contracts. A lawyer can help you check it out first and make sure you aren't getting into a bad contract.

You also must consider supply and demand. When making those birdhouses, how many will you need? How long does it take you to build them? Can you outsource the design if business picks up? The cost of the employees or outsourced manufacture works against your total revenue. Always buy enough supplies to last you a while, but don't overspend. If you don't know how much you are going to need at first, wait a couple of months, and take an average of that, or a little more to work with. The opportunity will often dictate the need. In Pugh's case, he says, "I basically went into business to facilitate a need."

When you get out into the business world,

you'll also need to get your name out to the public. Advertising comes in lots of forms. If you're running on a budget, you could try making posters, or printing business cards using your home computer, or if you would prefer something larger, you could try something like a radio announcement. Getting the word out about your business is crucial to success. In Pugh's case, he was hooked into the local boarding world anyway. And having a presence in a sporting goods shop that first year helped raise the profile.

Make sure that your advertising will reach the people who will be most interested in your business. Make your posters flashy and eye-catching, and clear and to the point. Let them know who you are, where you are, and what you do! Advertising is like selling yourself; you have to make the consumer want your product.

It's helpful to access your allies, too. Pugh's mother worked as manager of his shop while he was in high school and in his first year of college. "I knew I could trust her," he says. And it was helpful, too, that his accountant dad could do the books. "I signed my mom's paycheque," he says with a laugh.

Finally, make sure you always aim high. Almost any entrepreneur can agree that you will never take flight if you aim for the ground. But never stray from your roots. Remember the people that took you to the top, and always appreciate what people do for you. Work hard, and aim for your goals.

Pugh has since moved to Vancouver, but his shop is still running in Fort McMurray. "Being in business for more than 10 years is a high point," he says. "And I've made friends interested in skateboarding and snowboarding from age 14 to 40. It has a real family feel to it." ■

Your mom might be OK if you work in the basement for a while, but one day you'll need to find a new place

Do's and Don'ts

Try it

- Aim High
- Save
- Spend Wisely
- Advertise
- Be confident
- Access experienced mentors around you

Forget it

- Spend all your money in once place
- Act like its going to be perfect
- Forget to work hard
- Be afraid to put yourself out there
- Don't assume anything

The Resource Room

- **Canadian Youth business Foundation** www.cybf.ca
- **The Business Link** www.cbsc.org/alberta
- *The Young Entrepreneur's Guide to Starting and Running a Business* by Steve Mariotti
- *The Young Entrepreneur's Edge: Using your Ambition, Independence, And Youth to Launch A Successful Business* by Jennifer Kushell
- **Northern Alberta Business Incubator Centre for Entrepreneurs** www.nabi.ca
- **Fort McMurray Regional Business Development Centre** www.fmrdbc.com
- **richby30.com**

In Line with an Idol

Rosy Lee soaks up the scene as she waits in line at the *Canadian Idol* tryouts with her sister. Maybe next year they'll bring a guitar

By Rosy Lee

It isn't exactly a scene of pandemonium inside Southcentre Mall, the *Canadian Idol* auditioning site in Calgary, but it is certainly one of tense anticipation, even at eight o'clock in the morning. Most likely we've all seen a bit of *Canadian Idol* – or its U.S. counterpart *American Idol* – whether you're a hard-core fan or simply surfing the channels for a little triumph or tragedy. However, what we all associate with drama and disaster is in fact a nerve-wracking, nail biting – albeit dressed-up – audition. This time, my sister Jamey is a contestant. Before even entering the mall we come face-to-face with a poster outlining *Idol*'s "Taping Agreement." It declares that anything they tape can be made public. In essence, "if you embarrass yourself and we see fit to show it to the entire country, don't be angry when you see it on our TV show."

These people mean business, I'm thinking, until we enter the chaotic mess that is the lineup. A man dressed entirely in yellow

"Anyone would be nervous but you have to try and not let it get to you, or else they'll notice."



directs us to a place in line where everyone else is as confused as we are. I see people clutching lyrics and lugging guitars around and even some with folding chairs. Not long after we get into line, Jamey is given an *Idol* bracelet and after a half hour she is ushered into an administrative lineup for contestants. I decide to take this opportunity to walk around and talk to a few people who are already registered.

One of these people is 19-year-old Chantal from Fort McMurray, who says she has been singing since she was five years old. This is her third time trying out for the competition. She has a guitar with her and is sitting on a chair with her legs crossed and black high heels peeking out of her jeans.

"Not much has changed," Chantal tells me. This year's *Canadian Idol* differs from past competitions in that the show's rule-makers have granted permission to use instruments in the auditions. On CTV's website it states clearly, "you will not be at any disadvantage in the audition process if you choose to sing without instrumental accompaniment." And the guidelines do say that it's accompaniment - say, with a guitar or keyboard - rather than singing then playing.

"The rules say you have to be able to play and sing at the same time," says Taylor, 16, who held off bringing his trombone. Taylor has never had any voice training and this makes me wonder what the judges will say. I ask a girl named Kristin if she's nervous. "Anyone would be nervous but you have to

try and not let it get to you, or else they'll notice," she said. She's holding a guitar too.

I go off in search of my sister, who's survived the mob and received her contestant number. We settle down to wait beside the hundreds of others gradually filling up the empty spaces on the floor, and lining store windows. On average the people look surprisingly normal to me. I don't know what I was expecting, but I think it was something stranger or more exciting. All the weirdos are eagerly grabbed by the cameramen. I see an Elvis impersonator in full costume and a David Lee Roth-type in tight leopard pants, a pink top and crazy gelled blond hair, but that's it.

After a couple of hours of sitting, Jamey's number group is finally called. For the first round, competitors are brought in groups of five in front of a producer. Each comes forward to sing one verse and one chorus from a song of their choice. If they are successful they advance to the second round.

"While we were sitting outside the audition room, all I could think of was how I just wanted to get in there and finally sing," Jamey says. "I felt I sang well, but I was concerned that the producer didn't recognize my song choice - Joss Stone's 'The Chokin' Kind.'" Jamey was asked to sing another song. This time she chose the popular jazz standard "Summertime."

More than 1,300 people tried out on Saturday and after only one round three-quarters of the competitors were cut. Talk about competition! I find this horrible but fair, and I am secretly glad that the producers take the competition so seriously. Jamey made it all the way to her one-on-one audition with another producer via the yellow ticket that she received in the first round. However, the four guitar-playing contestants each received a blue ticket - the ticket to the celebrity judge auditions. I remembered the CTV statement, "you will not be at a disadvantage if you don't have an instrument," and I wondered if it was true. My sister sang *a capella*, and we both think that the scales are a bit tipped in the summers' favour. Later that night, she joked that she would have to learn to play guitar before auditioning next year - if she can convince herself to withstand the 10-hour wait in the mall again. ☺

This is Karl Alzner

Karl Alzner is a rising star in the Canadian Junior Hockey league. He's currently lacing up his skates for the upcoming NHL draft

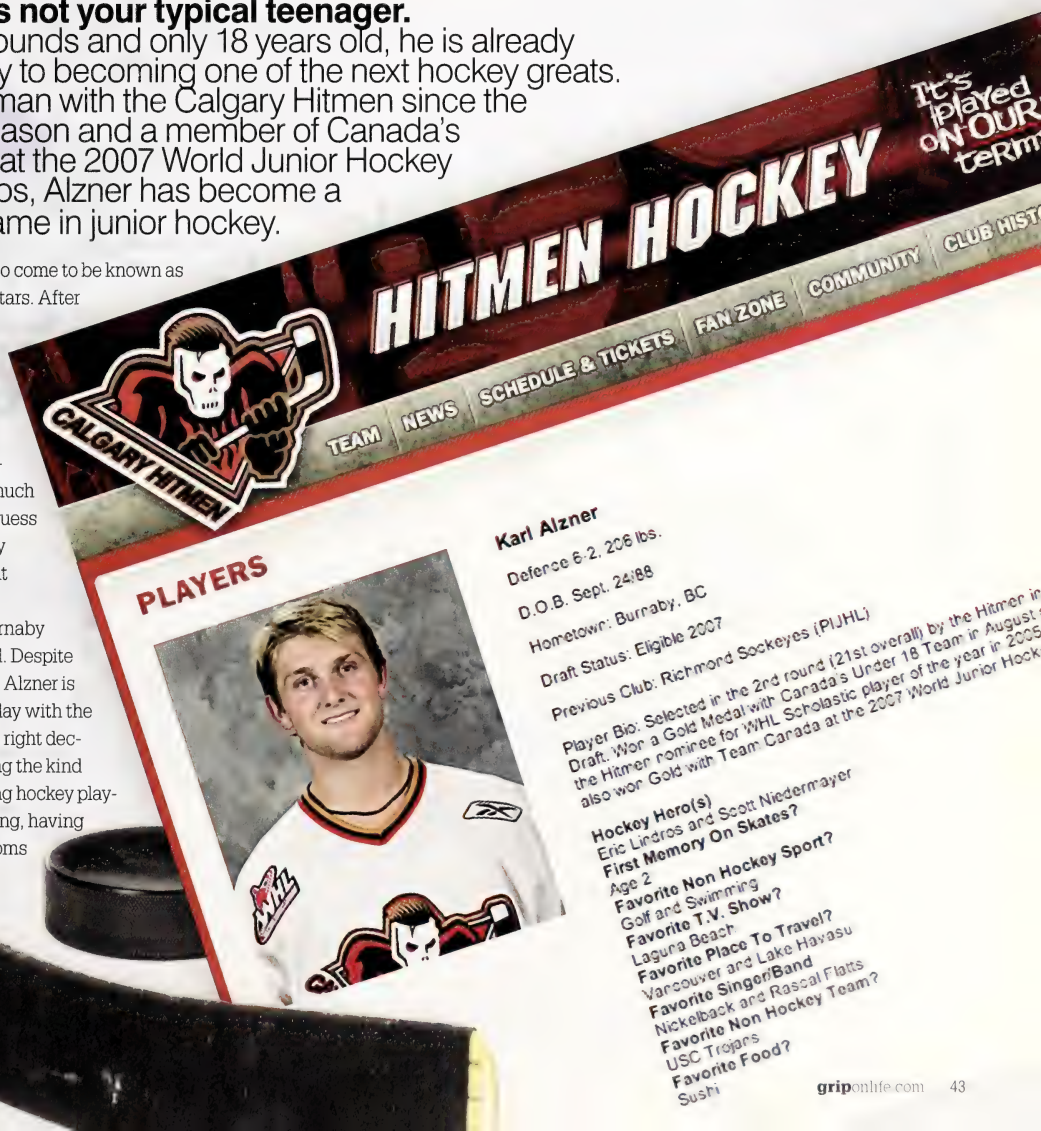
By Lisa Ostrowski

Karl Alzner is not your typical teenager.

At 6'2", 206 pounds and only 18 years old, he is already well on his way to becoming one of the next hockey greats. As a defenceman with the Calgary Hitmen since the 2003-2004 season and a member of Canada's winning team at the 2007 World Junior Hockey Championships, Alzner has become a well-known name in junior hockey.

This June, he may also come to be known as one of the NHL's rising stars. After years of hard work, he's finally eligible for the NHL draft. "Finally, this year. Last year should have been my year, but because of my late birthday, I've had to wait so much longer," Alzner says. "I guess I'm just anxious to finally get my shot and take that next step."

Alzner grew up in Burnaby on B.C.'s lower mainland. Despite the difference in setting, Alzner is certain that moving to play with the Calgary Hitmen was the right decision. He says he's living the kind of life that most young hockey players dream of: touring, having fun in hotel rooms



HITMEN HOCKEY

It's played on OUR terms

TEAM NEWS SCHEDULE & TICKETS FAN ZONE COMMUNITY CLUB HISTORY

PLAYERS

Karl Alzner
Defence 6-2, 206 lbs.
D.O.B. Sept. 24/88
Hometown: Burnaby, BC
Draft Status: Eligible 2007
Previous Club: Richmond Sockeyes (PIJHL)
Player Bio: Selected in the 2nd round (21st overall) by the Hitmen in August.
Draft: Won a Gold Medal with Canada's Under 18 Team in August.
the Hitmen nominee for WHL Scholastic player of the year in 2005.
also won Gold with Team Canada at the 2007 World Junior Hockey Championships.

Hockey Hero(s)
Eric Lindros and Scott Niedermayer
First Memory On Skates?
Age 2
Favorite Non Hockey Sport?
Golf and Swimming
Favorite T.V. Show?
Laguna Beach
Favorite Place To Travel?
Vancouver and Lake Havasu
Favorite Singer/Band
Nickelback and Rascal Flatts
Favorite Non Hockey Team?
USC Trojans
Favorite Food?
Sushi

and most importantly, being able to have a good time and playing hockey.

"You really get thrown into [this lifestyle] at a young age," Alzner says. "We started going on the road for tournaments when we were 11 or 12, so it gives you a taste of what life is like. But it gets more and more serious."

As a kid, Alzner would go to the hotel, play with his friends, eat dinner and have a good time at the tournament. Now, his routine is more mundane: He goes to the hotel, sleeps, eats, sleeps some more, watches a little bit of TV and sleeps again.

"It's a little more boring and repetitive, but it's actually pretty fun in a way, too. You get to see a lot of places," Alzner laughs. "For example, I know a lot of small towns in Western Canada that a lot of people have never even heard of. So it's fun to throw out stupid facts about towns that no one else knows."

The classic Canadian dream of being a hockey star is nothing new to Alzner. Only a couple of years ago he was playing his way up through local teams until he reached the Canadian Junior level. Following in the footsteps of his idols, like Scott Niedermayer, was not always his plan, he says, but it ended up that way. He explains that his love of hockey came from his parents.

Alzner started playing hockey when he was four and has been skating since he was two. "I think it was honestly my dad [that made me decide to play hockey].

He played hockey but not at a high level, so he never had the chance to go any further," Alzner says. "My parents just wanted me to go out and do something, and – well, hockey's pretty much just what you do in Canada."

Although Alzner likes to attribute many of his successes to luck, any observer can see that it is undoubtedly far more than just luck. Alzner was chosen from

"It's a little more boring and repetitive, but it's actually pretty fun in a way, too. You get to see a lot of places. For example, I know a lot of small towns in Western Canada that a lot of people have never even heard of. So it's fun to throw out stupid facts about towns that no one else knows."



among hundreds of players from across the country to play for Team Canada in the 2007 World Junior Hockey Championships. The team went on to win the tournament. Alzner says Sweden was a high point in his career.

"We had a lot of fun. I just wish we got to go out a little bit more," Alzner says. "I wish we

could have seen more of the country, of the cities we were in. But it was still really nice there."

He discovered another of his favourite places to play when he was a child visiting Quebec. "I went there when I was younger and I just loved it," Alzner says. "We had so much fun skating on the outdoor rinks." Coming from balmy Burnaby, Quebec's outdoor rinks were a novelty.

Despite the apparent glamour of the sport, Alzner cautions that working to become a professional athlete has its downsides. The hard work and strenuous training required to be at the top of his game sometimes leave him completely worn out.

"There hasn't been a rock bottom for me, but there are times where you go through slumps," Alzner says. "You're not producing and the coaches are harping on you. I've had a little bit of that happen. When I got back from that tournament in Sweden I wasn't producing as much as I wanted to offensively, and that really wasn't how I wanted to come back."

As he waits for the upcoming draft, Alzner has spent this last year focusing solely on hockey. After graduating from high school last

year, he attended Calgary's Mount Royal College for four months and studied marketing. In January, he decided to focus on what means the most to him, and that means spending as much time as possible on the ice preparing for the summer draft.

"I really want to have my energy for the

Karl Alzner's Stats

Season	Team	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
2003-2004 WHL Season	Calgary Hitmen	1	0	0	0	-1	0
2004-2005 WHL Season	Calgary Hitmen	66	0	10	10	8	19
2005-2006 WHL Season	Calgary Hitmen	70	4	20	24	14	28
2006-2007 WHL Season	Calgary Hitmen	63	8	39	47	16	32

draft," Alzner says. "It would probably be a little bit much for me to be doing that and school."

Being one of the most sought-after Canadian junior hockey players doesn't seem to have had a major effect on Alzner; he's surprisingly modest. Despite all of his success, he still finds it odd when other people look up to him. "It's really weird actually! I'm always asked, 'Who's your role model?' and if someone were to say I was their role model, I think, 'Well, why? I'm just a kid still.' It's kind of funny."

"When I heard that one of the guys on my team who is one year younger than me wrote in our team book that I was his role model, I was just incredibly surprised. But it feels good at the same time to know that other people look up to you and appreciate what you're doing."

Alzner appears to have found the perfect line of work. He not only has the ideal build for a hockey player, he also has the skill to be a great

defenceman. He believes that hockey is where he belongs.

"I honestly have no idea what I'd be doing if I wasn't playing hockey. I look at what my other buddies are doing and they're working in restaurants and things like that, going to school. But I can't see that as my kind of thing," Alzner says. "I always like to be moving and part of the action. I think maybe if I wasn't playing hockey I'd be some other kind of athlete. But I just can't imagine anything else."

Expect to see Karl Alzner making waves over the coming months. In the meantime, the future star offered some advice to young people: "Even when you don't want to go to the rink, you should go and practise because it pays off in the long run," Alzner says.

"You really have to make sure you take care of yourself. But always make sure you work hard. More importantly, you should be having fun." ■



Check Out Karl

The Calgary Hitmen
www.hitmenhockey.com

Karl on Hockey's Future
http://hockeysfuture.com/prospects/karl_alzner

Alzner on the WHL
<http://whl.ca/en/stats/player.php?id=24019>

Wikipedia Karl
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karl_Alzner



She shoots, scores and studies

Lindsay McAlpine, one of the top student athletes in Canada, finishes her university career with a bang

Most students can attest to the heavy workload and demanding expectations associated with completing a university degree. Athletes know a few things about hard work, too.

Lindsay McAlpine knows about both. After five years of juggling coursework with teamwork, McAlpine will graduate with her education degree and a string of awards and championships from her achievements as a forward on the University of Alberta's women's hockey team.

The 23-year-old was named the Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS) women's hockey player of the year after scoring

27 goals and 57 points in 24 games. In March, she was named Most Valuable Player of the tournament after the University of Alberta Pandas won the national title. The Pandas won out over the No. 1 ranked team, the McGill University Martlets, in a 4-0 shutout, and McAlpine and her fellow line members, Tarin Podloski and Jenna Barber, received a large part of the credit for the team's success.

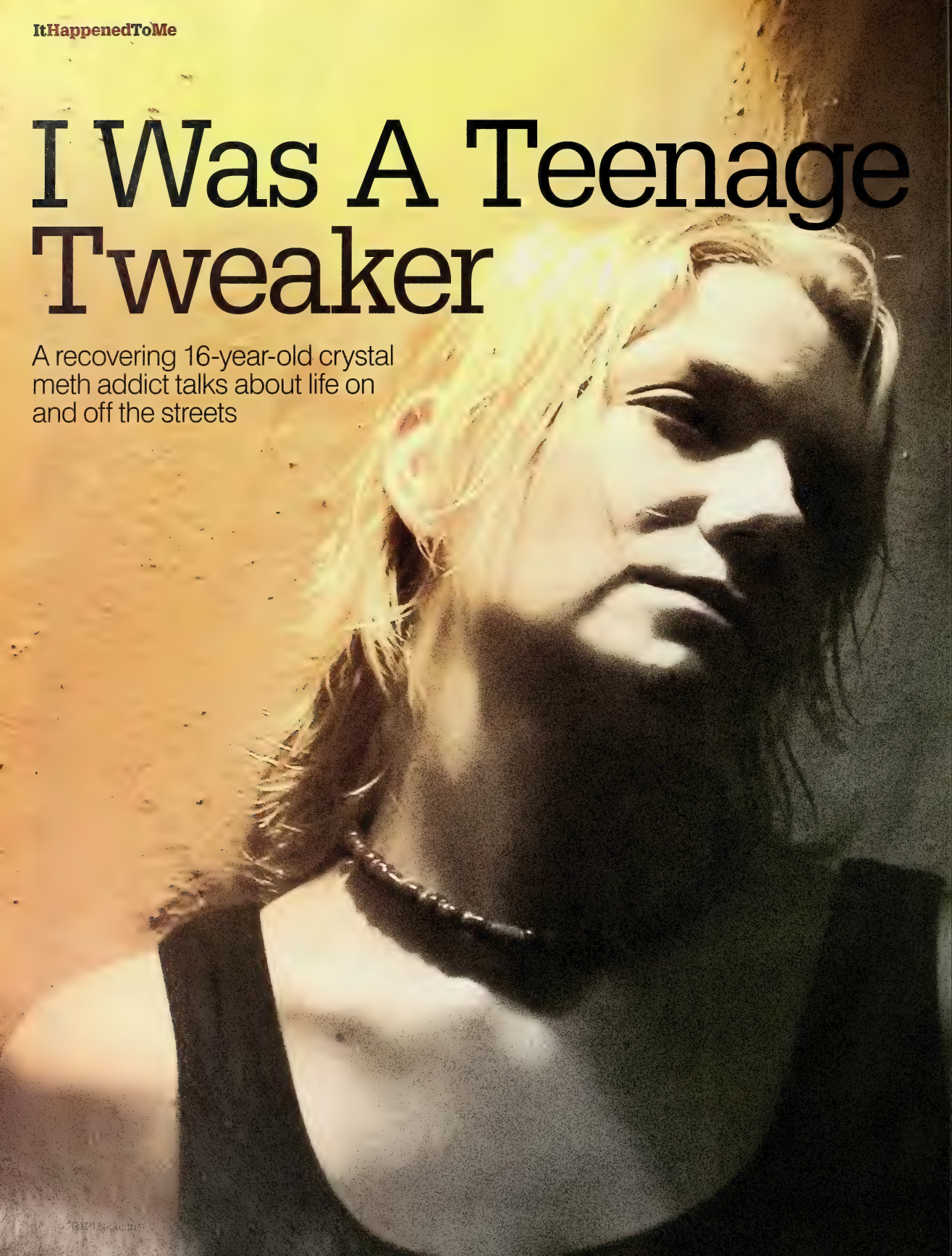
The win in Ottawa wasn't a first for McAlpine; the Edmonton native has won four CIS titles. She was named an Academic All-Canadian in 2005/2006 for maintaining a grade point average

of 80 per cent or better over the academic year in addition to competing, and was named the Canada West Player of the Year award this year.

What makes McAlpine's achievements all the more remarkable is that the 5'8" forward was diagnosed with Addison's Disease in 2001, her freshman year. Addison's is an autoimmune disorder in which the adrenal glands fail to produce enough of the hormone cortisol. Though the condition can cause weakness and fatigue, it doesn't show in the way she plays. In fact, in the 2002/2003 season, she didn't miss a single game.

I Was A Teenage Tweaker

A recovering 16-year-old crystal meth addict talks about life on and off the streets



In my own words

I was 12 years old when I got into the game

of the streets and I got addicted to crystal meth. The year before that, when I was 11, I used to smoke a lot of weed and one day I thought I was smoking a joint but it was laced with speed.

I

did not feel the weed high I was used

to, so I asked my friend why. He told me it had speed in it. I asked him where I could get some more. He told me, and then he actually got me some.

I was not sure how to use the substance I got but I got info and tried it out, I liked the high it gave me. I did not feel all tired or lazy – I just wanted to go! I had all the energy in the world, I felt like I was at the top of the pile. Coming from where I did, it was nice.

I have had a very troubled childhood. My mom was an alcoholic and my dad was a coke addict and a drug dealer on the streets of Edmonton. When I was younger my mom would beat me when she was really drunk.

When I was 10, my best friend's boyfriend (he was older) took me to a crisis centre because he was sick of how my mom treated me. That's when my experience with social services started. They opened up a file and started an investigation on my mom. But of course she put on a different face when the social worker came over. Then one day social services came to the door and I was sure they were going to take me away. I was really scared. I packed my stuff and jumped out my window and went to my friend's house and stayed there for a while.

Because I was AWOL I was temporarily made a ward of the court. And I had a warrant out on me because of that. When they found me, they took me to a foster home. At the time I didn't

even know what a foster home was or how it worked. I stayed there for a couple weeks. Then I decided to leave and go get high with that friend who had showed me what speed was. Eventually, I ended up back at home with my mom.

When I first used meth it was all fun and games. I never thought I'd become addicted but I was wrong. I could not stop.

I was 12 and I had reached my rebel age. I didn't care what anyone said. I was sick of the way my mom acted toward me so I thought if she can get drunk, why can't I get high? But that thinking led to a really bad life for me.

I ended up on the streets and with the people who smoked speed. They were all adults and they thought I was older than I was. I had to lie or else I would not get my hoot or my dope if they knew how young I was. I was living on the street and doing crimes so I could get money to get my dope. I didn't go home because I thought that being on the street was better than being beaten up all the time by a drunk mother.

Life on the street was not fun. I got into a lot of trouble with the law and had really become dependent on the drug. I went on binges for three weeks at a time during which I hardly slept or ate. I just drank water and did drugs. I lost a lot of weight, too. I wasn't all that big when I was young but the drugs had really sucked out all the fat that I had. Trying to survive on the street was a hard thing to do. Especially those winters were terrible. Finding warm clothes was pretty

hard. So I had to steal from stores to get underwear and socks and hoodies and even female products but I managed to survive.

When I was 14, I had been addicted and on the street for two and a half years. I had really gotten into it with the law and I had a missing persons file the size of Edmonton. I tried to change my appearance by piercing my nose and coloring my hair but I managed to get arrested anyway. The police took me to the crisis unit and were trying to figure out what to do with me. I was really high from a three-week binge when they found me and I needed to detox so they took me to my mom's house but there was no answer. They had another option – to send me to a group home. I needed sleep really bad and I did not really argue because it was either a cell or a bed and I chose the bed. They dropped me off, and straight to sleep I went.

The next day I woke up and forgot where I was and how I got there. The people in the home filled me in and I freaked out. I wanted to leave but I couldn't because I had a one-to-one worker on my back, I was also sicker than a horse from all the dope I had taken and all the sleep I still needed and the food I had not eaten so I just sucked it up and stayed there.

Detox was very bad. I had the shakes and the sweats, and I was hallucinating. I was in a lot of pain from withdrawal and all I wanted to do was have a hoot to make it go away but I couldn't.

When I was done a few days later my social worker told me I was going to a place called Grimmon House. I had no idea what it was or where it was and I didn't want to go. My social worker told me it was rehab and only girls lived there and it was near Calgary. I was like, no way, I'm not going. But I had no choice.

I was in Grimmon House for two months and I ended up AWOLing in Calgary with another girl. We had hitchhiked to Edmonton and found some speed again. I was only out for four days and I turned myself in to my social worker and went back to Grimmon House the same day. I was higher than a kite and usually you're supposed to be clean for three days but I detoxed at the treatment centre. I was surprised that everyone was happy I was back, they were not mad and I did not get punished.

After I cleaned up, I figured out that I couldn't live with my mom because she can't parent me. I've accepted that. I met a very good foster family that took me into their home and treated me

as one of their own. I've been there for two years and life is great. But it hasn't been easy.

I had a relapse in May 2006 when I was almost two years clean. I went back to Grimmon did some more figuring out about myself and now I'm seven months clean again! I've gained weight I look good I feel good and I've worked really hard to stay clean. Now I'm trying my best to send the message out to people about drugs and how they mess up your life! And how they change your perspective on things, and how anyone can be a target to this addiction, and that this disease is killing people everyday.

Thank you for taking your time to read this and I hope it makes a positive impact on someone's life. ☐

Four Myths about Meth

1. Myth: Try methamphetamine once and you'll be addicted forever.

It is an incredibly addictive drug, but according to AADAC no substance – not even tobacco – is so powerful that everyone who tries it gets hooked. Addictions tend to develop rather than just appear, and your ability to withstand it depends on your lifestyle and genetic makeup.

2. Myth: Crystal meth is a new drug.

Methamphetamine first appeared in the early part of the 20th century. What is relatively new about crystal meth is the sophistication and scale of illegal production, which has made the drug cheaper, more potent and more readily available.

3. Myth: Methamphetamine is the drug that poses the biggest threat to Albertans.

Meth is a dangerous and addictive drug, and use is on the upswing. Other serious public health threats include the killers tobacco and alcohol.

4. Myth: Once you're addicted to crystal meth, you can never recover.

It is true that long-term use can make some aspects of treatment and recovery more difficult but addiction can be overcome.

For more information, contact your local AADAC office or call 1 (866) 33AADAC.

Talk about meth:
gripsonlife.ca

The ABCs of Amphetamines

- Amphetamines are a group of artificial stimulants. The group includes dextroamphetamine, methamphetamine (**speed**, **crystal meth**, **crank**), and smokable methamphetamine (ice). These drugs all have similar effects. Smokable methamphetamine looks like shaved glass slivers or clear rock salt.
- Some users have **delusions of power and superiority**, others become hostile and aggressive. Small doses of amphetamines give the feeling of increased energy. At higher doses, you feel euphoria. It can produce an extremely pleasurable rush or "flash" that lasts a few minutes.
- Side effects include restlessness, shakiness, sweating, anxiety, headache, blurred vision, **dizziness**, **irregular heartbeat** and **chest pain**. If you use amphetamines regularly you can have sleep problems, mood swings, irregular heartbeat, high blood pressure, constipation or diarrhea, and nutritional problems. High doses result in nerve damage, chronic psychosis, paranoia, and hallucinations.
- Overdose can cause hallucinations, high fever, **seizures**, **coma**, **stroke**, **heart failure** and **death**. Amphetamine users who inject the drug with shared needles risk getting hepatitis and AIDS. **Foreign particles in meth, such as Drano**, damage blood vessels, kidneys, lungs, and brain tissue.
- When you engage in illegal drug use, the aspect of the law that you are violating is two-fold: the Canadian Drugs and Substances Act and the Canadian Criminal Code. **Most young drug addicts do crime** as a way to make money, in which case they can be charged under many different aspects of the law depending on whether they have robbed a store, stolen a car or a credit card. If you are caught with illegal drugs on your person or in the process of using them and you're between the ages of 14 and 17, **you can be sentenced to up to seven years** in a centre for youth offenders.



Portfolio

In each issue of **Grip**, we feature creative works from our readers – poetry, personal essays, short stories, illustrations, comic strips and photography. Winning submissions are awarded \$50 and are featured in the magazine and on the website at www.griponlife.ca. Send in your submissions to creative@griponlife.ca

Just Dancing BY MICHELLE LYSOHIRKA

Swaying, inaccurate rhythm
pulsing to predictable beats
lost in nothing.
Just moving
always moving,
where

you aren't there.
Our world is nonexistent,
the sky is green.
I never believed you anyway;
truth died years ago.
But nothing matters

not anymore
the world turns upside down
when I'm dancing.
Always when I'm dancing.

The War BY STEPHANIE SMITH

The soldiers strong, their guns were charged
the bullets flew past eye and arm
and many men we knew and loved
were shot. And there they died among
friends and fathers, while foe were stunned
to see so many take their lives
and use them as a shield for
those who lived and those who died.

The guns were loud, the hatred wrong,
and as men fell their cries died on
their frozen lips, and numbing hands
that reached for the gun so deathly strong
upon the dirt so far away
Many thought they'd gone astray
for here they lay with all their might,
their glory gone into the night.

This hour we remember them,
to tell the story again and again
Of those who lived and those who died
and in our hearts we hear their cries.
We honour them and do not forget
the war that made us all regret.

Midnight BY STEPHANIE JONES

Founded in the heat
Of a strong sewer storm,
They sold their fingernails
To the crowds,
Waiting for the rain
To predict lightning bolts

And love's fortunes.
Seaweed wraps as blindfolds
For their eyes;
Neptune's wrath for wasted blood.

They lit fires at midnight
And watched them burn, 'til dawn.

Seasons BY SAM RIDGWAY

Frost clings
to brittle twigs,
snapping at the touch.
Soft air melts the snow,
leaving for new growth.
Electric sun glows,
lighting up the world.
Gracefully falling leaves
tumble and glide,
landing silently.
And frost clings
to brittle twigs,
once again.

Train BY GRAHAM NOSTER





Captured BY MICHELLE LYSOHIRKA

Pissing in the Breeze

BY ALLISON MCPHAIL

I bite my tongue
against words best left
unsaid.
If I opened my mouth
you'd deserve
what came out,
yet I'd be the one
reprimanded.
For you, who lacks
a single shortcoming,
may absolve yourself
of all blame.
To speak out in defiance
would be unlawful,
irrational rebellion;
passionate, emotional.
Pissing in the breeze
with you
the cold, logical
authority figure,
standing upwind.



Sepia BY LOUISE RAMBIERT

Susie

BY LEVI MICHAUD

I'd see Susie every day, singing
and sitting all alone
and I'd think: What's wrong?
Why doesn't she go home?

Her face, though red and tear-stained,
always had a smile.
I'd try to think how I'd help her
to ease her pain for a while.

Someday I should ask her
what bothers her so.
But everyday something came up
and I would never go.

Then one day I didn't see Susie
sitting and singing her sad song.
I wondered what had happened;
I wondered what went wrong.

The school buzzed with whispers –
some girl died, they said on the news.
Apparently they knew her,
apparently she was physically abused.

The reports had said her name that night,
they all said the same:
Susie White was the deceased –
that had been the singing girl's name.

I cried for a long time that night
about how I was so incredibly dumb.
I could have helped her!
But I just stood there, frozen and numb.

No day since has been the same,
each day I wish I had done something.
And I wonder if I had
maybe she'd be here, with a happy song to sing.

"What?!" cried Nieya, "Yes!" As Nieya danced with joy around the tipi, her black, braided pigtails swirled behind her.

"It's not decided yet," her mother said. Nieya immediately stopped her happy dance, her braids hanging still. "I said, it's not decided; girls or women may or may not be able to hunt along with the men." Hands on her hips, she looked like Kapaki, the storytelling elder, thought Nieya. The girl frowned at her mother and went off to the forest to practice hunting.

All day long, she practiced. It really wasn't that easy, since it was snowing hard. The biting, frosty teeth of the surrounding mid-winter air wasn't helping at all. She scanned her surroundings. Her hands were numb, her delicately featured face red and dry.

There was a sound. Nieya jerked around. To her surprise, there was a rabbit right beside her white like the snow. Actually, her stupidity had surprised her, not the rabbit. Awakened from her thoughts, she stumbled to get her bow and arrow. By the time she stood up again, the rabbit had already pelted away.

That night she lay in her bed by the fire, listening to her mother.

"Don't run off again. Your father saw your bow was gone and we didn't know where you were." As mother blabbed on, Nieya tried hard to ignore her. But one thing finally penetrated her concentration: "And the hunt's starting tomorrow."

"What?" Nieya sprang from her bed.

"If you'd been here, you'd have heard," her mother remarked. Nieya turned on her side, and thought



Water Daisy BY ALIX WILLIS

"I'm following the hunters, early tomorrow."

In the morning the fire was out, and the tipi was cold again. Nieya stretched and yawned. Her mother had laid two pieces of pemmican on a rock beside her. She reached out for it. It was as cold as ice and hard as the rock it had been laid on, but she slipped it in her pouch. Then she slipped on her jacket, threw on her moccasins, snatched her bow and her arrows and burst out of the tipi. She shot through the forest like an arrow, frantically following the hunters' tracks. It was snowing hard and

it blinded her. "I was foolish," she thought, "I slept too long."

She walked on for many long hours. Her feet were cold and the monstrous, icy-breath of winter seeped through her jacket. She took out a piece of pemmican and nibbled on it. "Perhaps if I climb a tree, I may see them."

She slowly climbed the nearest tree. It was sleek and slippery with frost. A strong gust of wind forced its way to her; flecks of snow smacked her face. She gripped the tree tightly.

Crunch. Startled, Nieya turned her head to see what had made the noise. She had dropped her bow. She looked around for the safest way to get down. Another evil gust of wind blew. This time, Nieya was unprepared. She slipped and fell head first down to the snow covered forest floor below.

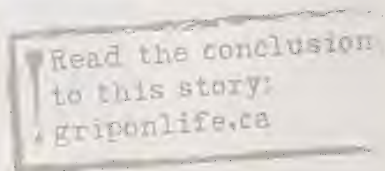
She didn't know how long she'd been lying at the bottom of the tree when she heard a voice.

Awaken little human. Loud and clear, the voice seemed to come from inside her mind.

Nieya's eyes flickered open. *Do not move. Who are you? Where do you come from?* The voice echoed inside her head.

"I am Nieya of the Plains People. I am following the hunters' tracks." She looked around. Suddenly, she sat bolt upright, her body charged with alertness. "Who are you? Show yourself!"

Summer Crevasse BY ALIX WILLIS



My lust for nonconformity began early. In Grade 3 I was reprimanded by my teacher for submitting a poem about a woman's vibrant collection of panties. By Grade 5 I was an outcast, hiding under my mousy-coloured bangs, yet defying loudly any peer who I suspected of "doing me wrong." A middle school essay on Adolf Hitler as part of a class project had parents demanding it be censored. My grades were bad; I had little interest in teenybopper parties or joining school clubs, and was genuinely confused by pop-culture. I prefer to hole up in my room reading off-beat literature and brooding fiendishly.

But the feeling of empowerment I absorbed from being different was forgotten shortly after my 14th birthday, when I experienced the ultimate act of nonconformity. My mother revealed her ongoing affair with a former teenage flame, shattering our family and searing a hole through my heart. My chance to be a teen was stolen, while I contended with her sudden youthful exuberance and the switching of mother/daughter roles. Throughout the rest of my adolescence, I watched her face fall as I walked into the room instead of

her boyfriend. My mother – who had worn Doc Marten boots, denim cutoffs, strummed her out-of-tune guitar, made the best grilled cheese sandwiches while preaching to me about never making sacrifices for men – appeared to be brainwashed. Hardly different than the rest of the girls in my grade. Experimenting with tropical blue eye shadow, greasy bubble gum pink lip gloss, and tugging down a ruffled miniskirt as she ascended stairs, my mother would often retreat to her bedroom (and her sedatives) when she had an argument with her boyfriend.

For the rest of my adolescence I struggled to validate my presence. I endured abusive comments about my existence from her boyfriend, who struggled with a substance abuse problem. I stood up to him, my mind flaming, although my legs were shaking. But I no longer felt proud of being different. Spending my 16th birthday in a juvenile mental health institute was a source of deep shame, not hilarity, as it once might've been. I was scarred; deeply. I feared that not conforming could do nothing but scar as well.

I had been hurt and I was afraid of hurting

anyone else. But there was something in me, some tiny flicker that said, "Don't give up! You'll always be different and that's okay. You can be brave, you can speak out and you can defy the taboo without hurting everyone around you."

So I made it my life's ambition: Operation Speak Out. I planned for a career in communications, a chance to use writing, photos and film to bring shadowed topics into the light. Like child and spousal abuse, mental illness, sex exploitation. The tongue piercing, the long hair hacked off and dyed the color of pomegranate juice, the tank-top that said "Be yourself be beautiful" were only the superficial manifestations of my project.

The real goals were much simpler: Be kind. Don't be ashamed of yourself and where you have been. Practice selflessness. Mentor the young and vulnerable. Volunteer. Smile. Buy the homeless woman a coffee, a scarf, or a bus ticket. Ask for your Christmas present to be a charity donation in your name. Society has forgotten these simple values in exchange for materialism, an 'image', a hectic personal life. But I won't conform, will you?

Costa Rica Sunset BY EMMA HOLMES



A Girl's Best Friend

By Shelley Astill

You know how some people say diamonds are a girl's best friend? Well, they lie.

Yeah, a diamond may sparkle, intrigue and last forever, but a shoe, a shoe is a glorious term for something that can create miracles. A nice pair can bring about the rebirth of an outfit, dead for many years. A shoe is not only a type of footwear but a creator of beauty and happiness. A perfect pair makes a person feel like a real woman. Every outfit needs the precise, flawless pair. It's just not the same without them. Even though I have 57 and a half pairs (I lost a shoe in the lake two summers ago), I need more.

Last summer I burst through the sparkling clean glass doors of the mall like an enraged elephant with just a single primal thought: Shoe Sale. Flying past door after door, window after window of goods, I'm on a mission. Excited? Maybe. Scared? Definitely. Somewhere in this jungle of merchandise madness there is a breathtaking treasure, shoes waiting for me to discover them. But sadly, today my mom is with me. She tells me to spend my money elsewhere, more carefully and on other non-amazing items. But I say spend it all now. Why would I buy school supplies and food when there are shoes?

THERE! I catch a glimpse of them – The Shoes – through the twinkling lights of the store

window. Bright lights gleam and glisten upon them almost as if they're standing on a stage. Colours of red, blue, purple and yellow awaken my senses, sending a surge of greed up my back. They are dazzling yet dainty, curvaceous but yet sharp. Could they be any better? My eye is drawn downward three inches to where the stiletto meets the stage. Sassy and spectacular. I barely have enough strength to rustle up a voice.

"Size six please," I croak. The store clerk smiles knowingly. She's seen my kind before.

I feel royal just waiting for her arrival from the backroom with The Shoes. The clerk brings them to me and I carefully slide the striking, spotless and snug pieces of shiny vinyl onto my feet. I take my first step in the world with them and begin to float on clouds.

My feet revel in the explosion of wearing magnificent shoes such as these. A cold hand on my arm snaps me back from my reverie.

"Those shoes are way too expensive, you have way too many and they are so impractical," my mother snarls from behind me. "Take them off!"

I entertain the idea of fleeing down the mall in The Shoes. But the grasp on my arm is too tight. Dejectedly, I take them off and put them back in the tissue-lined box.

As we leave, I turn around and whisper, "I'll be back for you." ☹

Top 5 All-Time Shoe Looks

1) The Ankle Snapper: These shoes have a heel so high your tendons scream with every wobbly step. Only dull girls walk in straight lines. Risking fracture is the mark of a real woman.

2) The St. Bernard: Make sure your shoelaces drag at least three feet behind you and the tongues stick out of your boots like you've shoved your feet in a St. Bernard's mouth. Nothing impresses ladies more than a guy shuffling across the street at the speed of melting ice.

3) The Chiller: It's -35°C. Do you know where your flip-flops are? Wear them; you might finally catch that cute podiatrist's roving eye – in emergency.

4) The Urban Hiker: In summer, make sure to wear socks under your sandals. Some might say it defeats the shoe's purpose, but the tan line at the base of your ankle or in the middle of your calf is the ultimate fashion statement.

5) The Nude Foot: The best kind of shoe is no shoe at all. Bare feet on the hot, burning sidewalk are very *in* these days for patchouli-covered love children. Mother Earth loves you, your filthy street tar-encrusted toes and your cracked, dry heels.

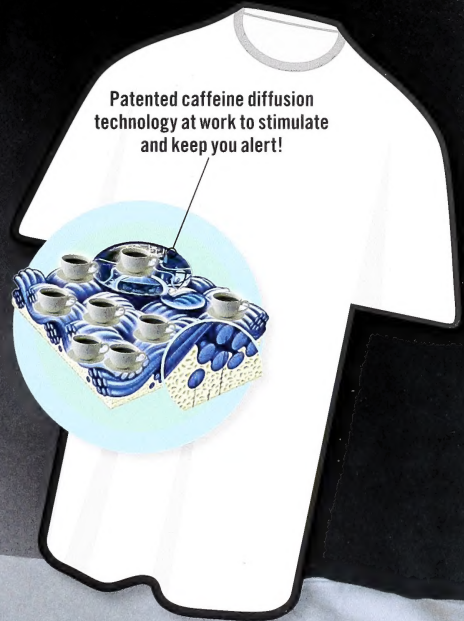
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